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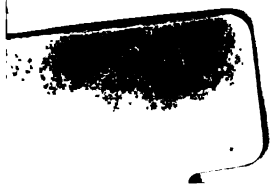
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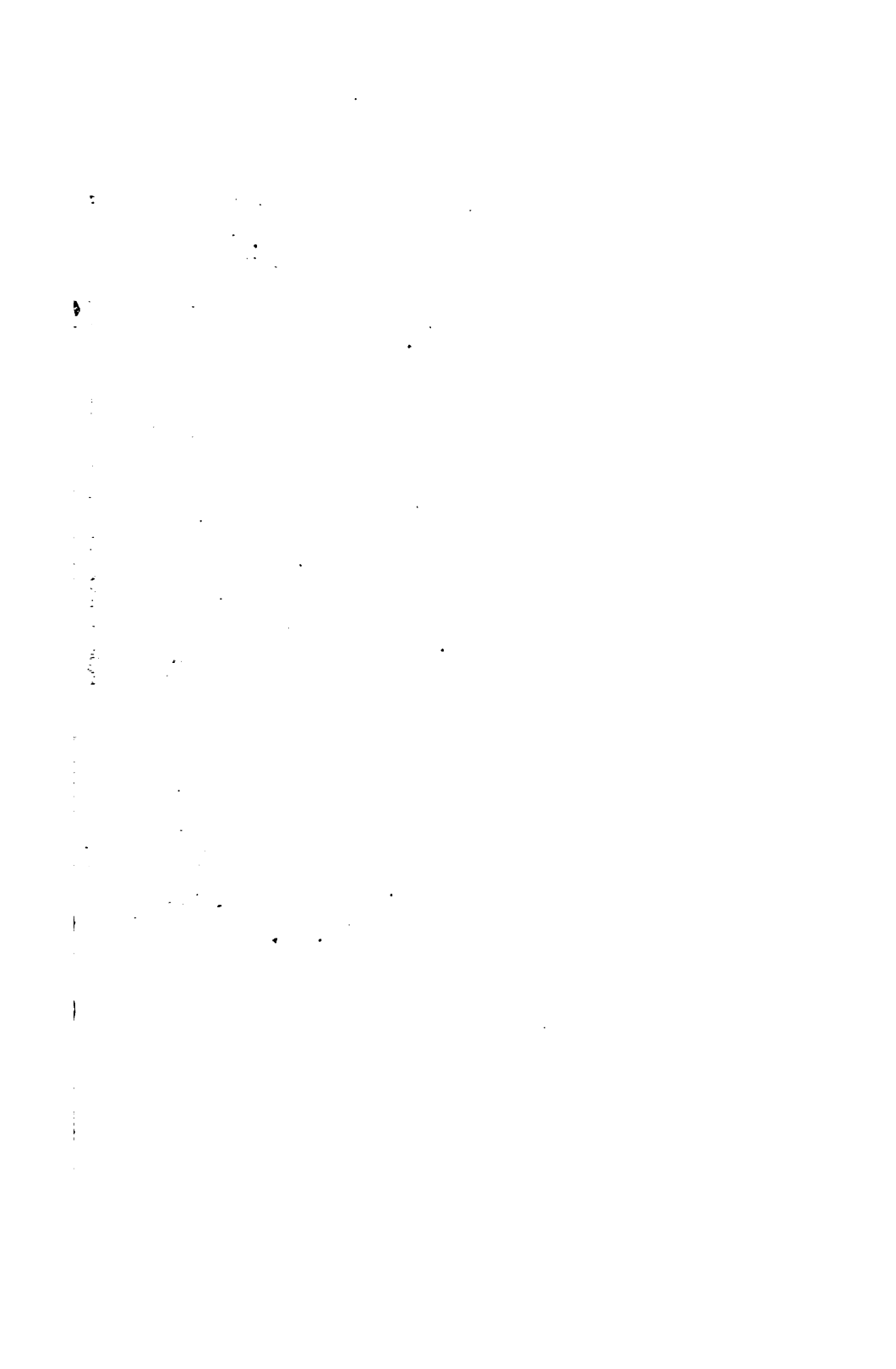
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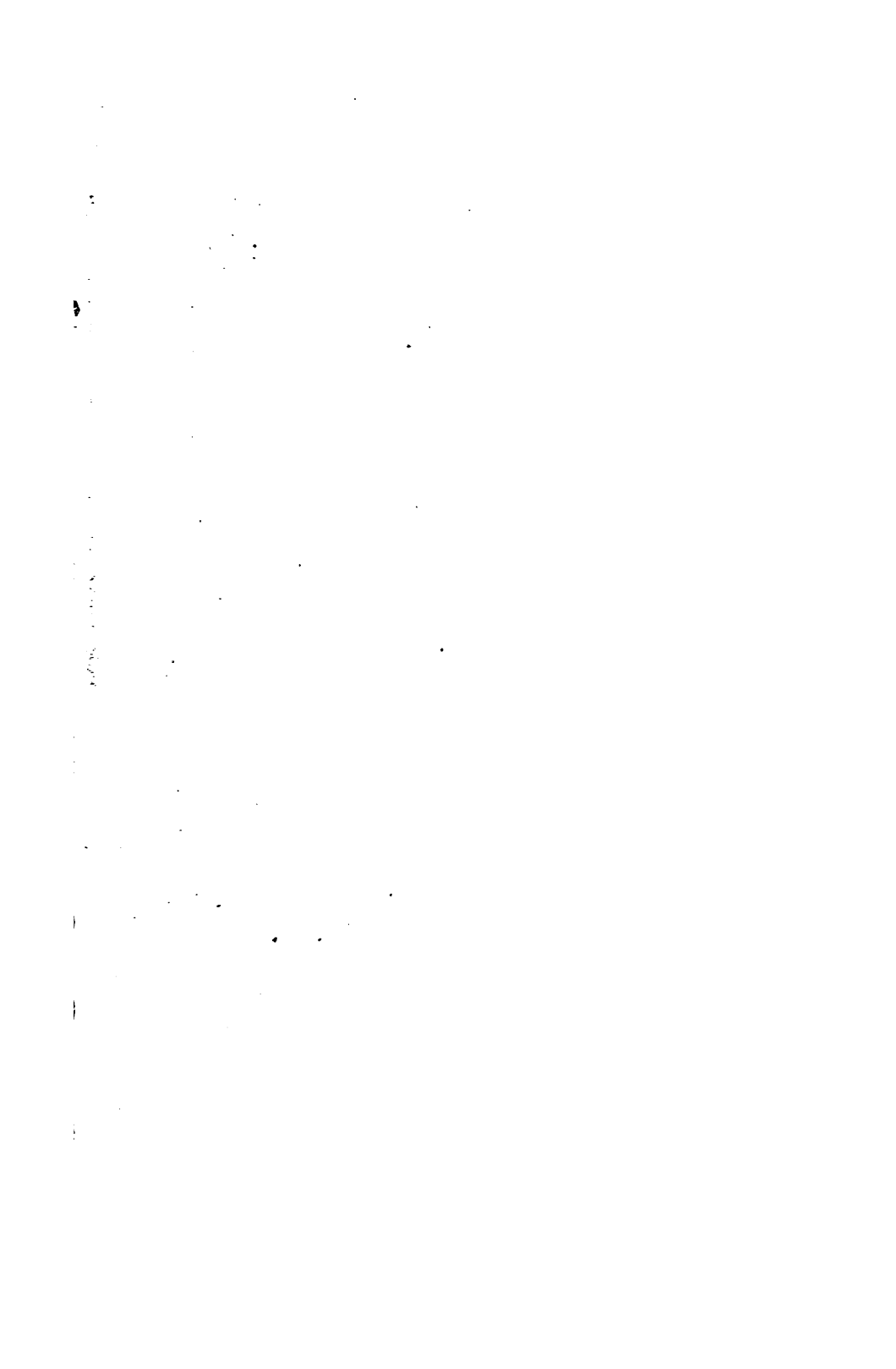




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HISTORY
OF THE
CHURCH OF CHRIST

UNTIL THE
REVOLUTION, A.D. 1688 :

IN A
COURSE OF LECTURES,

BY THE
REV. CHARLES MACKENZIE, M.A.,
VICAR OF ST. HELEN'S, BISHOPSGATE; AND HEAD MASTER OF QUEEN
ELIZABETH'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL, ST. OLAVE'S, SOUTHWARK.



LONDON :
SMITH, ELDER AND CO., 65, CORNHILL.

1842.

541.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY STEWART AND MURRAY,
OLD BAILEY.

TO
THE PARISHIONERS
OF
ST. HELEN'S, BISHOPSGATE.

To you, my kind parishioners, I desire to dedicate in all simplicity and sincerity, these LECTURES ON THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST. For your instruction they were composed, and in our parish church the substance of them has been delivered.* The form in which they now appear is somewhat different from that in which they were originally written, for I have ventured to suppress many of the remarks which were proper to the pulpit, and I have entered more minutely into some of the details of the history which seemed unsuitable to the solemn purposes for which we then assembled. They are now designed to interest you in the study of a subject which well illustrates the goodness of the Almighty, and the imperishable truth of his word:

* In the years 1839 and 1840, at a Lecture founded by Sir Martin Lumley, for the Tuesday evenings during the winter months.

DEDICATION.

and I have hopes that they will be instrumental in teaching your children to love the Church into which they were baptized, to value the privilege which they possess in being called to be the sons of God, and to own their consequent responsibility to live as becometh a holy and peculiar people. Many fallacies are now daily repeated in our land which might be easily exposed by a knowledge of facts, and many an objection is now put forth as new to unsettle the faith of younger brethren, which has been eloquently met and completely answered in past ages. Happy shall I be, if, through the medium of my imperfect labours, any individual member of Christ's Church shall be preserved from error or confirmed in truth; sufficiently rewarded for the small sacrifices of time and thought which this volume has required at my hands, if, by stimulating your love, and strengthening your faith, and instructing your little ones, I shall have done any good in my generation, and contributed in the minutest fraction to magnify the Lord my God.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Your very faithful Friend and Pastor,

CHARLES MACKENZIE.

*St. Olave's, Southwark,
9th July, 1842.*

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ERRATA.

- Page 18, line 3.—*for* "number" *read* "member."
— 9.—*for* "recond," *read* "second."
— 22, — 11.—*for* "Levi" *read* "Aaron."
— 226, — 1.—*for* "the sixth century" *read*
"the second century."

LECTURES

ON THE

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

LECTURE I.

*That there is a visible Church, one, Holy, Catholic, and
Apostolic.*

THE history of the Church of Christ demands our most serious attention. Besides the claim which that Church puts forth to a divine origin, and which alone calls for patient examination; the account of its progress and of its circumstances will be found both pleasing and profitable to every candid enquirer after truth. The prevailing ignorance upon the subject renders the investigation more important; for while the details themselves are only partially known, the principles with which they are connected are much misapprehended by some, and are entirely overlooked by others.

Hitherto the study of the school-room has been

confined to the dead languages, and to ancient history, with the occasional variation of modern literature, and of mercantile pursuits: but the Origin and Constitution of the Church, Christian Antiquities, and the Liturgy adopted in our own land, are almost entirely neglected.

The unhappy consequences of this omission are now perceptible in the mistakes which are daily made upon these points, and which are in danger of being perpetuated to successive generations.

If the true doctrine of God upon this subject were properly understood, religious differences would disappear. Men would forbear one another in love, and endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. They would be careful to speak the same thing, that there might be no divisions among them: and, holding fast the faith once delivered to the saints, and the “form of sound words which we have heard” of the Apostles, they would mark them which cause divisions, and avoid them.

2 Tim. i.
13.

While, moreover, the sin of schism and the errors of non-conformity would be thus avoided, the corruptions that have at various times been introduced, would be detected, and men might learn to recognise the marks of a true Church, and to distinguish between the fancies of the latitudinarian, the pretences of the Romanist, and the assertions of the Church of England.

The Creeds, the Articles, the formularies, and the Liturgy of the Anglican Church, hold a middle course between two extremes; and if they are proved to be consistent with sound doctrine, and with that which has always been held, everywhere, by all believers, the arguments brought forward to support them, ought, at the same time, to controvert the errors on the right hand and on the left.

In proving the Church of England to be a true branch of Christ's Catholic Church, we expose the mistakes both of Romanism and of dissent, but without the invidious appearance of attacking either. While we maintain the authority of the voice of the Church, we protest equally against the despotic dictation of a fallible council, and against the presumption of private interpretation. While we hold the tradition of the Apostles, we ^{2 Thess. ii. 15.} reject the *novelties* of the fathers as well as of the moderns. When we claim authority for an apostolical ministry, and teach that Christ hath ordained only two sacraments as generally necessary to salvation, we oppose the Independent no less than the Romanist: and when we preach Jesus Christ, and Him crucified, we differ as much from those who by unauthorised additions "preach another Gospel," as from those who would build up a fabric of morality without the corner-stone of faith.

In the confession of faith known as the Apostles' Creed, there is this phrase, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church:" and in that which is called the Nicene Creed it is written more at length, "I believe one Catholic, and Apostolic Church;" but of the many who repeat this phrase habitually in our congregations, it is to be feared that comparatively few have a just conception of its meaning.

Surely the pious men who framed our creeds would not have inserted as an article of faith, among matters of the gravest and most interesting nature, a profession that should be lightly esteemed; and, as surely, Christian men are not excusable if they repeat it with their lips, in connection with their profession of faith in the ever blessed Trinity, in the same breath with their belief in the Holy Ghost, without endeavouring to realize in their minds a true idea of what these words may mean.

How differently would different men explain this term—The Church.

Some view it as a visible—some as a spiritual society.

This man thinks only of the *clergy* when the Church is named; and another would confine his thoughts to the *temporalities* alone, if told that the Church were in danger, while the person

speaking might intend to speak of the Church as *an establishment*.

Nor will it be denied that there is some excuse for this variety of view in the various senses in which the term has been applied in Holy Scripture.

The word from which it is immediately derived is not to be found in the Greek Testament; but the corresponding word which is generally Englished "church," literally means assembly, *Acts xix.* and in some passages it is so translated. ^{32.}

The Greek *κυριακή* signifies belonging to the Lord, and its pronunciation is nearly preserved in the word Kirk. It occurs in the modern sense in writings of the fourth century, and afterwards in official and public documents. Being thus accustomed to its sound, our translators did not hesitate to adopt it for Ecclesia, or Assembly, when they found that word applied either to the body of believers in general, or to a portion of them met together in a particular place; whether that place were a province, a city, or a house.

In one text also it is applied to the congregation of the Jews, because they formerly bore the same relation to the Lord, as Christians did at the time that text was spoken. *Acts. vii.* Consistently with this, we find four variations in which this name may be properly applied. ^{38.}

1. All the elect people of God, from the beginning to the end of the world, who constitute one body whereof Christ is the head.

2. Any true portion of that body containing all the essential characteristics, as the Church of Corinth, of Ephesus, or of England.

3. Some smaller division of the same body, where the sacraments are duly administered in all things that are of necessity essential to the same, as the Church of a single parish;—and

Ob. 420. 4. A fourth application has been made since the time of St. Jerome to the particular building consecrated to the peculiar worship and service of God, as our parochial houses of prayer are properly called Churches.

Seeing then that we are all agreed that there is a Church, although different notions of it may exist in different minds, we must trace it back to its original institution, to see who was its Author, and what was the character which he gave it.

In the book of the Revelation we read of churches established in several cities. We find St. Paul, in his Epistles, writing to various churches existing at a distance, while in the course of his travels *Acts xv. 41.* he *confirms* others. Before his conversion it is *Acts viii. 3.* recorded that there was a great persecution against the Church which was at Jerusalem, and even earlier than that, on occasion of the death of *Acts v. 11.* Ananias and Sapphira, it is said that great fear

came upon all the Church; and in the first description given of professors of Christianity after the descent of the Holy Ghost, it is written, the Lord added to the *Church* daily such as *Acts* ii. 47. should be saved.

This brings us almost to the time of our Saviour's death, and we naturally ask, was this indeed the infancy of the Church, or had it previously existed? There are two occasions when the word was used by Jesus, and the circumstances attendant upon each will throw much light on our enquiry. The first instance is that recorded in connection with St. Peter's memorable *Matt. xvi.* profession of faith, when, with an allusion to his ^{18.} name, which signified a *rock*, our Saviour rejoined, "I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my *Church*, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Herein we find several things worthy of notice;—1. That the Church was not at that time built;—2. That when erected it was to be called Christ's Church;—3. That Peter's profession of faith was to be the corner-stone on which it was to be built;—4. Probably that Peter himself should in some way be engaged in its erection;—and 5. That it should last for ever.

And these are precisely the characteristics that we claim for the Church of Christ.

The second instance in which our Lord em-

ploys the word in question, gives us farther information as to its nature, character, and office. He directs, that if any of his disciples should fall into sin, he is to be, first, admonished by the brethren; but if he neglect to hear them, He

Matt. xviii 17. says, "tell it to the Church; and if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be to you as an heathen man and a publican." It hence appears that

Christ's Church was to be, not an invisible institution, a mystical corporation, as some seem to consider it, held together merely by secret bonds and spiritual relationships, but plainly a visible body—an institution which could hear complaints against any of its offenders, and reprove with authority; while its directions were to be received with submission, and the rebellious were not to be considered worthy of being admitted to a share of social hospitality or of religious worship.

In farther confirmation of the view that it was a *visible* Church which our Lord intended to found, we read that out of the great body of his disciples he chose a certain number, to whom He gave the power of teaching his doctrine, of introducing new members, and of forgiving sins, with the remarkable promise, that "He would be with them until the end of the world."

Moreover, for the purpose of introducing new members, and, as the express mode by which

they who believed on Him should be incorporated in His Church, he instituted a particular sacrament, with a new and special form of words, viz., that they should be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

The practice of baptizing was not invented by our Lord. It was probably in common use among the Jews, but wherever it existed it implied the enrolling of disciples under a new master, and thus admitting them into his society. Of this existing custom, then, our Lord availed himself; but as he could baptize not only with water, but also with the Holy Ghost, His baptism was attended with greater privileges than any practised by the Pharisees or by John the Baptist. As an introduction to a new religion, it ranks with the baptisms common in those times; but as an appointed means of grace, it bears an incalculably higher character.

By the aid of an argument which this baptism furnishes, we are also enabled to determine that the Church is *one*. St. Paul has told us that there is "one faith and one baptism;" and history confirms our view, that by the preservation of our Lord's words, one baptism has in all ages been administered to all Christians. Whether we speak of ourselves, or of our Christian ancestors, to the tenth, or to the hundredth generation, we were all admitted into the Church by one means, viz., by

washing or sprinkling with water, and in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Nor does this remark apply only to one country, but to all the countries professing Christianity.

Perhaps it may be thought that we are laying too great a stress upon this point, and that among the numbers admitted into the early Church this mode of introduction was not insisted upon. Hear *Acts ii. 41.* what the Scriptures say: "Then they that gladly received his word (the preaching of Peter after the descent of the Holy Ghost) were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." Even the Ethiopian nobleman knew this, and notwithstanding his faith, felt that he was not a Christian until he had been baptized. In like manner it is recorded of Saul, on his conversion,—of Cornelius and his Gentile friends,—of Lydia and "her household,"—of the Philippian jailor and "all his," upon coming to the knowledge of the truth they were "baptized straightway." *Acts xix.* Moreover, it is said of the Ephesians, who had been baptized into John's baptism, that neither they, (when the matter was explained to them,) nor the Apostle Paul, nor, if we may so speak, the Holy Ghost, deemed John's baptism sufficient, for "they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus; and when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied."

But lest there should be any doubt of the oneness of this baptism, St. Paul writes to the Corinthians; “By one spirit are we all baptized ¹ *Cor. xii.* into one body;”—and that no question might ^{13.} arise respecting the *Apostles’* adoption of this mode *without* our Saviour’s sanction or commandment, we have it expressly stated by St. John, that ^{iv. 1.} though the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, Jesus him- ^{verse 2.} self baptized not, *but his disciples.* Or if any were to argue that this power of baptizing, or this mode of introduction into his Church, was not continued to his disciples *after* Christ’s removal, we put to silence the objector by a text, which seems to settle the whole question:—“Go ye,” said our Saviour, when about to ascend into heaven, to his Apostles left behind—“Go ye and teach all nations, (or as *Mat. xxviii* the margin has it, more literally, make disciples of ^{19, 20.} all nations) baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world.” This same argument from baptism which has helped to prove the Church of Christ a visible body, and at unity in itself, will also help to prove it to be Catholic or Universal. As already noticed, the mode of admission has been the same in all ages, and in all countries. It matters not whether men were

admitted into the Church at Jerusalem, at Ephesus, or at Rome; in the days of Paul, or in modern times; in this, or in any other country; that admission was by baptism, and implied entrance into the Church of Christ. We were not especially baptized into the Church of England, but into that of Christ,—not in the name of Paul, or of Apollos, of Luther, or of Calvin, but in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Hence it was always understood in early times that a member of the Church in one city might freely communicate in another to which he had been properly introduced; that is, to which he had brought evidence of his baptism and of a holy life; and hence we feel ourselves members of the same Universal Church of which Paul and Peter were Apostles, which shall last for all time, and opens its arms to the reception of all believers, not having respect of persons. Wherever there is the one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, and Father of all, there is one portion of the same Church, of which we in this country are another portion.

We are, moreover, in the habit of professing our faith in a holy Church. This title has been applied to the Church of Christ for several sufficient reasons. First; it appears, from the Apostle's view of it, that it is formed of persons who are called and separated from the rest of the world to serve God, who has so called them with a holy

calling. The separation itself implies a sanctifi-² *Tim. i. 9.* cation, and therefore the body so separated seems not unaptly to be called "holy." And if a difficulty should arise, because, as it now appears on earth, the Church contains both good and bad; hypocritical and profane persons, as well as faithful and sincere; because it is called holy, although not entirely and perfectly holy; the objector ought to be reminded that St. Matthew called Jerusalem the holy city, even at the time when our Saviour was beginning to preach, when there was a general corruption both in morals and in worship, and when it was rejecting his affectionate summons to repentance and newness of life. It had been set apart for a holy purpose, and its holy privileges caused it to be called holy.

But it happily appears that this same objection to its being called holy, because it is not perfectly so, furnishes us with another argument that our Church is a visible body, and not an invisible institution simply spiritual. It is, under the title of the kingdom of heaven, likened to a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind,—to a field in which wheat and tares grow together until the harvest,—to a floor in which is laid up wheat and chaff,—to a marriage feast, in which some have their wedding garments, but some, neglecting their privileges, have them not.

This is that ark of Noah, in which were pre-

served beasts clean and unclean. This is that great house in which there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honour, and some to dishonour. There are many called, and of all these consists the Church on earth; but there are few

Matt. xxii. chosen, *i. e.* admitted to the full privileges of the Church in heaven. Hence it evidently appears, such similes being used in Scripture, that the Church means something more than a mystical communication between the spiritually minded; that it is a visible body of men, who, though not all holy, are all called with a holy calling.

There is another reason why the Church should bear this title, *viz.*, because of the offices and powers in the Church which are emphatically given for holy purposes. It is for the express worship and service of God that this portion of the world is set apart by him. It was to maintain his worship pure, that the family of Abraham was selected from the rest of mankind; because, said

Gen. xviii. God, "I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." It was to preserve his truth uncorrupt that a Church, or portion belonging to the Lord, was preserved from idolatry in the wilderness; and it is still that we may call upon the Lord, that he daily adds to the believers multi-

tudes both of men and women, such as should be, or, more literally, those that are saved.

A third and very important reason for Christ's Church being called holy is, because the members of it are by their admission particularly bound to holiness. St. Paul writes to the Church at Rome as to men "called to be saints." He says to Timothy, "Let every one *that nameth the name of Christ* depart from iniquity," and that by this description the Church of Christ is meant appears from the following passages. When Saul persecuted the Church, it is said that he had authority to bind "all that called upon the name of Christ;" and when he preached Christ in the Synagogues, all that heard him said, "Is not this he who destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem?"—accordingly, as the early converts had adopted this principle, and in all the integrity of genuine faith and sincere repentance, had embraced Christianity, the name of *saints* is often used as another name for *Christians*, and the Scripture teaches that we are called to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Acts ix.
14. &c.

The whole character of the doctrine of the Apostles is to the same effect, that, the new privileges of believers called them to newness of life, that they were to be "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." All profane and evil speaking, all unrighteous

deeds, and unclean thoughts, were to be put away. Virtue was to be added to virtue, and grace to grace, till the flesh was crucified with the affections and lusts, and every fruit of the Spirit was acquired, and "holiness to the Lord" was the bright motto inscribed on every man's banner.

How many solemn thoughts of privileges and responsibility are brought home to our hearts, when we remember that with this holy calling, to these holy purposes, and for these holy occupations we have been called the elect of God! And if yet we look for a fuller realization of this word "holy," as applied to the Church of Christ, we must stretch our thoughts beyond the vista of time, to the region of eternity. In the last days, the angels (the reapers) shall separate the wheat from the chaff; and while the worthless are thrown out to be burned, the precious are gathered by God's mercy into his own garner, and thoroughly purged from their sins; being washed in the blood of the Lamb, they are sanctified by the holy Spirit of eternal purity; and, robed in white garments, when prepared as a bride to meet her husband, the church shall come forth, radiant in loveliness, and He, the bridegroom, shall present her to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish.

Matt. xiii.
39.

Eph. v. 27.

The next point is to show that this holy, visible, and united Church of Christ, is also Catholic and Apostolic.

It has been, indeed, already argued from the appointment of the same baptism as a means of admission into all the several churches, that all its members were united under one head, and together form the Catholic, or Universal Church; but as the word is itself a foreign one, and has been differently understood, it deserves more lengthened observations.

The word "Catholic" does not occur in Scripture, and had not always a place in the creeds, but *Pearson*,
 was introduced by the early fathers to distinguish ^{p. 504.}
 that which was of all times, and for every age, from that which sprang out of peculiar opinions, and exercised only partial authority. In a somewhat similar sense it has been applied to those epistles of Peter, James, and John, and Jude, that were not addressed to any individual congregation or person (as St. Paul's were), but "to them that have ^{2 Peter i. 1.}
 obtained like precious faith;" "to them that are ^{Jude 1.}
 sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called," *i. e.* to all the members of the Christian faith scattered abroad in every place. That this title is not inconsistent with the true character of the Church we see, first, in the fact that in different climates and in distant regions the same Lord is worshipped, the same faith

is held, and the same baptism administered; whence not only the whole body was called the Catholic Church, but any particular faithful number had the same title, as continuing in the true faith with the rest of the Church of God. And thus we

Euseb. Ecc. Hist. iv. 15. read of the Catholic Church in Smyrna, in Alexandria, &c.

But in its preservation and teaching of *all* truth, a second reason has been assigned for the possession of this name. That is said to be Catholic doctrine which has always been maintained by all Christians every where; and that is said to be the Catholic Church which is the depository and guardian of that doctrine. In like manner, what the Church holds it teaches. Unlike the esoteric and exoteric (the private and public) tenets of the philosophers, Christianity keeps nothing back from its disciples. It has not one code of morals for the rich and another for the poor—one set of principles for the teachers and another for the taught; but that also which it has received, it faithfully delivers. As the Holy Ghost did lead the Apostles *into all truth*, so did the Apostles leave all truth to the Church.

Thirdly, the term has not been improperly applied to a Church that holds a promise of extending itself over the whole world as the waters cover the sea; because, although at present not exercising its influence over all, we believe that it will

ultimately find its way into the most distant corners, and before the end of time spread its boughs unto the sea, and its branches to the river, and cover all creation with its shadow. Hence we find the saved Gentiles in the Revelation crying to the Lamb, "Thou wast slain and hast re- *Rev. v. 9.* deemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." This reason did the ancient fathers give why the Church was called Catholic, and the nature of the Church is so described in the Scrip- *Pearson, p. 524.* tures.

In its authority over all, we might find another justification of this title, both in the respect of persons, obliging men of all conditions, the governing and the governed, the famous and the private men, says St. Cyril, of Jerusalem, and in *Catech. 18.* relation to its precepts, requiring the performance of all the evangelical commands.

And, lastly, in its possession of all the graces; for by it, says the same father, all the diseases of the soul are healed, and spiritual virtues disseminated; all the works, and words, and thoughts of men are regulated, till we become perfect men in Christ Jesus.

From these observations it appears that great power and dignity and authority belong to the Catholic Church of Christ; but some are fearful

lest, in magnifying her claims to respect, we should be bordering on Romanism; such alarm is however groundless. If we neglect this bulwark of the true faith, we deprive ourselves of many an argument for the unity and integrity and visibility of the Church, while, in maintaining the Catholicity, in its full force, we overthrow all the novel and peculiar tenets of the Papacy.

Of the true Church we speak as Catholic, but of the members of the Romish Church as Romanists. Acknowledging as we do the existence of a Catholic Church, if we were to give them the peculiar right, which they assume, of being called Catholics, we should condemn ourselves of being schismatics, a term that we repudiate: but in maintaining the true character of an universal Church, we protest against the false pretensions of such as bear the sectional name of Romanists, whose Church, in its present form, has not existed in all ages (for its *peculiar* opinions, as we shall presently show, were unknown in the earlier centuries of Christianity), and who have not either preserved or taught the whole truth, but in our opinion have made the word of God of none effect by their traditions; and by vain superfluities have made the Gospel "another thing" from that which our Saviour preached.

But it is time we now proceed to examine with

what propriety the Church of Christ is called Apostolical.

It appears from St. Mark's Gospel, that out of a greater number, whom the Author of our Church *Mark* iii. 13, 14. called unto him, He "ordained twelve that they should be with him, and that He might send them forth to preach." And so St. Luke says, "He called unto him His disciples, and of them He *Luke* vi. 13. chose twelve, whom He also named *Apostles*." The word apostle means "*sent forth*;" and from this very word, given by Christ to his chosen preachers, we might infer that none should take this office on themselves unless they were *sent*; but lest we should be in doubt upon this point, St. Paul has explicitly asked, "How shall they preach except *Rom.* x. 15. they be *sent*," implying that it was impossible; and so, when writing to the Hebrews, he maintained the same doctrines from the appointment of the Jewish priesthood, from the calling of Aaron, and from the miraculous sanction given to our Lord—"No man taketh this honour unto himself"—that *Heb.* v. 4. of offering sacrifice for sins—"but he that is called of God, as was Aaron; so also Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest, but He that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee."

The allusion to the Jewish priesthood reminds us, that, both in the Patriarchal and in the Mosaic dispensations, there had always been some ap-

pointed ministry. In old time, the first-born had been holy to the Lord, and subsequently God chose the tribe of Levi instead of all the first-born, to minister under Aaron the high priest, and to do the service of the Tabernacle. So strictly was this privilege maintained to them, that the law decided, “The stranger who came nigh was to be put to death.” And Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, were punished by awful judgments, because they disputed the authority and rebelled against the directions of the sons of Levi. From this we are permitted to infer that a constituted ministry would be no novelty to the Jewish people, and that “the law had a shadow of good things to come.” While in this, as in other matters also, “the body is of Christ.”

Numb. iii.
10.

But it farther appears, that having thus admitted twelve into an inferior office of the priesthood, viz., that of preaching, He afterwards (since He should be no longer with them) gave them greater authority.

In an early stage of his public life, the disciples had been permitted to baptize; but it was only when he was going away that he uttered the full sentence of commission, “Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” It was in the latter days that He breathed upon them, and said, “As my Father hath sent me, *even so* send I you.”

Mat. xxviii
19.
John xx.
21.
See *Luke*
xxii. 29, &
John xvii.
18.

And it was on the ever memorable eve before his betrayal, that, in the appointment of his holy supper, in commemoration of his sufferings, He seems to have recognized their office of perpetuating it by future administrations. To them alone the command was given, and yet that festival was to be continued until He should come again, and ^{1 Cor. xi. 26.} therefore it would be their duty to declare to others his will in this particular, and to show to others how Christ had broken the bread, and blessed the cup.

From this then it appears that our Lord meant his Church to be apostolical. The first preachers of his doctrine he named *Apostles*. To the same men He gave authority to baptize and to communicate. The same He commissioned, with all his own fulness of authority, to go into all nations, to convert them to his faith; and with them He promised to be until the end of the world. We next enquire how the Apostles themselves understood this commission. It is evident from one of their earliest recorded actions after the ascension of our Lord, that they considered themselves called to a peculiar, holy, and dignified office; ^{Acts i. 15, &c.} that they believed no man could take this office upon himself, but must be called by God, and receive his nomination and appointment at their hands.

When the number of the Apostles had been

reduced to eleven by the sin and death of Judas, Peter urged his fellow-labourers to select another for the vacant office. The feeling that there ought to be twelve set apart for this holy work, entirely agrees with our knowledge of the divine dispensation, for, not only had our Lord especially named twelve, but, in allusion to the twelve sons of Jacob, and to the twelve tribes called after them, He had expressly said that they should sit upon *twelve* thrones, judging the *twelve* tribes of Israel.

The manner of election was by casting lots, after prayer to God that He would shew which of two faithful men proposed for the office he had chosen: and when the lot fell upon Matthias, he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

That this selection was agreeable to the will of God, we might infer from the result — from the sanction given to trial by lot in the cases of
Jos. vii. 16. Achan, of Saul, and of Haman ;—or, perhaps, more
1 Sam. x. 20. satisfactorily, from the promise which our Lord
Esth. iii. 7. had recently made to these very men, viz. that
Mat. xviii. 19. “ when two or three should agree together to ask any thing in His name, it should be given them.”
 But we have still stronger evidence in the outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon the day of Pentecost, when the same spirit that was poured on Peter, James, and John, was poured also on Matthias. Hereby may we stedfastly believe that

as the rest had been individually called by Christ to follow him, so was Matthias called by God, through the instrumentality of the Apostles, into the place from which Judas by transgression fell. Next, if we look to the letters of St. Paul, we shall find him constantly maintaining the same doctrine. Not only did he write as already noticed, to the Romans, "How shall they preach except they be sent;" and to the Hebrews, "No man taketh this honour to himself except he be called of God;" he asserts that his own mission *Gal. i.* was from the Lord Jesus, and when he claims ¹ *and 12.* authority, he appeals not to superiority in grace, ¹ *Cor. iv. 1.* or in trials, but to his office as a minister of God. ¹ *Cor. ix.* _{16.} In his letters also to Timothy and to Titus, he acknowledges that he has committed to them the privilege of ordaining elders, and expresses a caution that they "lay hands suddenly on no man"—a privilege and a direction, one would think, by no means necessary if any might take the office of preaching on himself, or if the power of ordaining were vested in the congregation.

Again he writes to Timothy, "The things that ² *Tim. ii. 2.* thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." And in his letter to the Ephesians, he refers the appointment of all ministers, (whether they were called apostles, prophets, evangelists, or pastors and teachers) to

Christ the Lord, who gave them, says he, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

Thus are we led a step farther. Besides the fact that the Church was actually apostolic in its first institution, the early history of Christianity declares that it continued to be so, that there was a transmission of authority from the Apostles to their successors.

Is it not most consistent with the conclusions that our reason would arrive at, to believe, that if, as we have seen, God established on earth a kingdom, or visible Church, and appointed twelve men to direct and superintend it, none could presume to take authority in that kingdom, or to preach in that Church, unless he possessed the sanction and appointment either of themselves or of their Lord?

And although we may hear much of an inward call as sufficient to that end, we are not able to discover that either the practice, or the Scriptures, of our Lord, sanction such a notion; for, as already shown, the Apostles were outwardly called from the very first by Christ himself; St. Matthias was elected into his office by outward and visible signs, and St. Paul was not only outwardly called by an express miracle, but submitted also to baptism, and to the laying on of hands by the favoured Ananias. Also, when separated for the

work of preaching to the Gentiles, Paul and Barnabas, after being called, were visibly commissioned by the Church at Antioch. Moreover, Timothy and Titus were confessedly invested by St. Paul with high powers, viz., to "ordain elders" and to "commit the truths of the Gospel to faithful men, who should be able to teach others." *Acts xiii. 2 and 3.*

But it would almost appear providential, that at the very point where the mind might begin to hesitate between the exercise of private opinion and the voice of authority pronounced by the Church, the voice of history steps in to corroborate the assertions of ecclesiastical tradition. Thus we find, on valid testimony, that St. John *Euseb. vol. ii. ch. iii.* consecrated Polycarp bishop of Smyrna, that St. Mark was succeeded by Annianus as bishop of Alexandria, James by Symeon as bishop of Jerusalem, St. Peter by Linus as bishop of Rome, that Crescens was sent by St. Paul to Gaul, and Dionysius the Areopagite appointed bishop of Athens. On the same, or indeed rather upon accumulated testimony, it appears that these again consecrated others to preside over their own and freshly-planted churches, and thus confirmed and perpetuated throughout the universal Church that regular succession of ministers which we term apostolical.

How far we, the Anglican Church, justly lay claim to this succession, is a question left for

future consideration. It is at present sufficient to have shewn, that Scripture declares that the Church of Christ was apostolical in its origin and in its continuance.

The same doctrine might be supported by a reference to the integrity and virtue of the sacraments, preserved only through the ministry, and to the powers of absolution and excommunication entrusted by Christ to his Church. It was to the *John xx. 23* Apostles our Lord said, "Whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain they are retained;" and it was of His Church that he said concerning the refractory, *Matt. xviii. 17.* "If he hear not the Church, let him be unto you as an heathen man and a publican." Authority on such important points derived from Him, and committed to His Apostles, must have been delegated by those Apostles to others, and again to others, in succession, if the Church remains as He at first appointed it.

LECTURE II.

History of the early Church, from the election of Matthias to the martyrdoms of Paul and Peter, with short arguments for the three Orders of the Clergy, and for Infant Baptism : also an outline of the travels of St. Paul.

HAVING established the fact that there is one holy Catholic Apostolic Church, we proceed to enquire into the early history of that Society, with a view of more clearly ascertaining its true character and authority.

From the smallest of beginnings arose the A.D. 33. Church of Christ: its first appearance was as the grain of mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds, but it presently took root and grew to be as the greatest among herbs. Agreeably to our Lord's prediction, it gradually put forth its branches and its leaves; under its grateful shade nations have taken refuge; it has proved a shelter from the storm, and a shadow from the heat; and its fruit it has brought forth abundantly in due season.

At the time of the election of Matthias into the *Acts* i. 15. office of an apostle, the number of the names

together were about an hundred and twenty. But after the miraculous manifestation of the Holy Ghost, which gave the Apostles at once more courage and more power, there were added unto them in one day about three thousand souls; and, as already noticed, they that gladly received

Acts ii. 41. the word were baptized. Their conduct is farther thus described: "And they continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done by the Apostles: and all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people."

From this picture of the early Church we obtain much valuable information: especially we see, that baptism is the recognised mode of admission; that all when admitted have an example of abiding stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers; and that it is a Christian's duty to live in unity and godly love,—to be ready to communicate,—

and glad to distribute,—especially to such as are of the household of faith.

Daily prayer and frequent communion are still the theory of our Church: even the headings of morning and evening prayer in the Common Prayer Book declare, that they are to be read daily throughout the year. And although, from lack of communicants, the bread and wine are not usually administered oftener than one Sunday in a month, the Metropolitan Cathedral, and some few churches, spread the altar every Sabbath day. The testimony of the fathers shews that a daily celebration was to a certain extent practised, but there was no fixed or general law with reference to this particular, and there was, in fact, a great variety of observance. With reference to the place of celebration, it appears that this sacrament was instituted by our Lord himself in *Luke xxii. 11.* a private house, and the places of which we read in *Riddle's Chr. Ant. p. 534.* the Acts of the Apostles, as the scenes of breaking of bread, were also private houses of the believers. *Acts ii. 46, and xx. 7.* But this need not surprise us when we remember that then Christianity was, so to speak, only a private religion. A little later we find that a place had been set apart for the celebration of *1 Cor. xi. 20, 22.* public worship, and for the administration of the Lord's Supper among the Christians; and that, being appropriated to its sacred purpose, it was

distinguished from private houses to eat and to drink in. In times of persecution, retired spots, caves, and the like, were the scenes of its administration, but this was done as a matter of necessity and of safety.

In times of sickness the consecrated elements were sent by the hands of deacons to the invalids. But the general rule was to perform both consecration and distribution of the sacred elements in the place of public assembly, or the Church.

After some mention of the courage, exertions, and miracles of Peter and John, the sacred
Acts iv. 4. historian of the times (St. Luke) records that the number of the men was about five thousand: and shortly afterwards he gives a second picture of the early Church, which scarcely differs from that we have already noticed, and which strikingly admonishes us to hold the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and to cultivate continually godly love towards the brethren. “And the mul-
Acts iv. 32. titude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.” That such is not the present condition of the Christian Church is the consequence of the evil disposition of man’s heart, and not of the system which the Church pursues. She looks to the spirit more than to the letter of obedience, when she continues

to urge her disciples, on apostolical authority, to adhere to certain doctrines and fellowship, as frequent attendance at the House of God, and breaking of bread; but no longer obliges them also to have all things common, to sell their possessions and goods, and part to all men, according as every man hath need. In the one case, the spirit of the example would be lost, if the steps of the Apostles were not literally followed; in the other, the spirit is more completely preserved by some slight variation from their literal practice; unless we abide in doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread, (holy communion,) and prayer, we cause a division in the Church, or we cut ourselves off from some of the highest of its privileges. But if, in a more widely extended congregation, and when, from want of exercise, the authority of the Church is greatly diminished, we were to make all things common, we should open the door to the extensive frauds of hypocrisy, and should encourage the extravagance of the dissolute; and while we rewarded the indolent, we should tax the industrious, the prudent, and the temperate, for their support. Nevertheless, in its true spirit, the Church still maintains the necessity of apostolic catholic charity. All we have is in trust for God, and for the poor; we may not turn away our face from any poor man: it is more blessed to give than to receive.

Happily this age is not destitute of instances of noble sacrifices to advance the cause of Christianity. However lukewarm the great mass of those who call themselves Christians, individual cases are now perpetually occurring, of which the praise should be in all our churches.

Acts iv. 36, The Apostle has memorialised the disinterested zeal of Barnabas, and we place no modern acts in comparison with his, because of the greater faith which must have been required, and the greater sacrifice which must have been made in those days. Moreover, he was nearly allied to St. Mark,—was the favoured friend of St. Paul and of the other disciples,—was himself a devoted missionary,—is said in Holy Scriptures to have been a good man,
Acts xi. 24. full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith, and has ever been accounted by the Church a saint, or holy person. But it is some encouragement and consolation, when we find men in the present day emulating his example. It is some confirmation of the view that the spirit of the Church of Christ is always consistent with itself, and will always, when faithfully received, produce the same results. If it should be argued that many modern contradictory cases might be cited of men who make false professions, and even of such as, appearing to make great sacrifices for the Church, are only gratifying their own vanity;—the Scriptures inform us that hypocrites have

existed in every day, and it is plain that the sin is that of individuals, not of the *Society* of which they are unworthy members.

The preaching and the miracles of Peter made many converts, so that believers were the more *Acts v. 14.* added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. But this success aroused the indignation of the Sadducees, who denied the doctrine of the resurrection; and they laid hands upon the Apostles, and put them in the common prison. How different did the conduct of the Apostles then appear from that which they had exhibited at the time of our Lord's apprehension. Then they forsook him and fled, but now, before the council, *Matt. xxvi. 56.* they determined to obey God rather than men; *Acts v. 29.* and on their release rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name, and *Acts v. 41.* notwithstanding threats and commandments, and stripes, daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus *Acts v. 42.* Christ.

It is not a part of our present plan to dwell at any length upon the evidences to the truth of Christianity; the history for the most part will declare this for itself; but it seems proper to remark, once for all, on the proofs derivable from the faithful patience with which the first Apostles endured persecution, and every kind of suffering.

The argument is handled at length by Arch-

deacon Paley, in his *Evidences to the Truth of Christianity*,—a work which ought to be not only in the library, but in the memory of every Christian man. It shews distinctly that many professing to be original witnesses of the miracles of Christ, passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief in those accounts; and that they also submitted, from the same motives, to new rules of conduct.

There is no principle upon which we can account for their conduct, if we do not admit their belief in their own professions to have been sincere. Men do not ordinarily prefer, for their own sake, imprisonment to liberty; wandering in foreign countries to enjoying peace at home; ridicule, reproofs, and scourges, to pursuing the quiet tenor of their way; nor the death of a malefactor to the life of a free citizen. If any voluntarily consent to these things, it is with some very attractive object, from some very powerful motive. But if the early Christians did not believe what they taught, they had no motive for doing as they did. By such conduct, they had everything to lose and nothing to gain. But once suppose that they believed the doctrine, the immortality, the eternal Sonship of Him who desired them to go into all nations, and the mystery is unravelled,

See 2 Cor.
v. 18.

and their motive clear. With such belief they could not be contented to hold secret to themselves those truths which they felt were to be ^{See 1 John i. 3.} good tidings to all the world. With such a sense of duty as this faith implies, they dared not ^{See 1 Cor. ix. 16.} remain silent, rejoicing in their own privileges, and seeing others walk in darkness. But in obedience to the Holy Spirit, in good will to men, in assurance of final reward, and in the hope of everlasting life, they dedicated themselves freely to God's service; and counted all things loss for Christ, satisfied whether they died or whether *Rom. xiv. 8.* they lived they were the Lord's.

A similar train of observations would apply to their embracing and inculcating a new code of morals. What else could free them from the bondage of sin? What other principle than faith enabled them to overcome the world? The whole history of the early rise and propagation of their tenets proves the same thing. Theirs was the maddest and simplest scheme that folly or bigotry could devise, if the truth were not on their side.

They had none of the usual weapons,—rank, or influence, or wealth, to force their opinions on an unwilling world; but were opposed by prejudice, by power, by long-established habits, and by greatly-degraded morals; by the aristocracy, by the priesthood, and by the learned of their own

nation ; alike by the philosophers and by the uninstructed of all other countries. If indeed Christ were not risen again, they were, of all men, as St. Paul said, most miserable ; for they had sacrificed all present goods, and had no security for future recompense. But in their simple unadorned faith they overcame the powers and the prejudices of mankind. They gained a victory over the evil passions of their own hearts. Whether we look to their personal triumphs, their extension of the truth, or the spiritualizing influence of their teaching, they overcame the world. Blessed by the graces of his Spirit, endued with power from on high, they worked a moral miracle in the introduction of Christianity, and did all things through Christ which strengthened them.

1 Cor. xv. 19. *A.D. 35.* When the number of the disciples was multiplied, a murmuring arose among the Grecians (or foreign Jews converted to Christianity) against the Hebrews, (or native Jews who had become Christians,) because the former suspected an unfair distribution of the charitable funds raised for the widows. It is probable that the number of the native widows would be considerably greater than the number of those from a distance, and perhaps, being better known to the Apostles, they were better cared for ; at any rate, a jealousy was felt by the Grecians, and caused this complaint. We cannot but look with regret upon this dissension,

because it is very sad when unworthy suspicions are encouraged to such a height as to endanger unity amongst brother Christians, and it seems more melancholy when differences arise about the distribution of charitable funds, on which especially we ought to desire the peaceful Spirit of our Lord to rest; but we are more struck with thankfulness at the kind providence of God which brought real good out of threatened evil, and at the superior wisdom of the Apostles, who met this difficulty in a truly Christian spirit. They did not hurl back angry recriminations, nor did they seem *even eager to defend themselves*; for conscious integrity prevented their being distressed by the accusation. At least, they knew that their time could be better employed in preaching, and ministering the Word of God, than in serving tables, (or, paying the daily allowances,) which might be done equally well by any honest and faithful men. Accordingly, they appointed seven men of good report among them for this business; and, if we may draw an inference from their names, they gave a preference to those who were *Grecians*, as if they would remove every shadow of suspicion from the minds of the complainants.

This is an important æra in the history of the Church. It speaks of additional ministers being introduced, and declares that such introduction

was made by the Apostles, with prayer and laying on of hands.

Acts vi. 6. It makes mention of a new order of ministry, inasmuch as, the number of Christians increasing, the Apostles took to themselves the higher office of ministering the word, and left to those newly-appointed to minister to the necessity of the saints. These new ministers, however, being appointed by laying on of hands, were evidently presented with *peculiar* authority, and we find from the cases of Stephen, and of Philip, that they were empowered to work miracles, to preach, and to baptize.

Looking on it in this light, it is plain that there were at this time two orders of the clergy; the one consisting of twelve Apostles, the eleven and Matthias; and the other consisting of seven pious men. The name that seems to have been given to these seven (although it is not recorded in the Acts) was Deacons, or ministers, because they were appointed to *deaconize*, (a Greek word,) or minister in the daily deaconship, or ministration. Hence it has happened that the lower orders of our clergy are called Deacons, although their duties are not precisely the same with the original Deacons; but this need be no hindrance, for even the Apostles, as this instance proves, changed the character of their services to suit the altered position of the Church. The Church of England, how-

ever, in retaining this word, applies it better than do some of her neighbours, who admit as a deacon one who has not been ordained by apostolic hands, and who assumes no more than the office of a layman. This leads us to the questions whether the Apostles recognized three orders of clergy, and whether those three are justly called Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.

I will endeavour to state the matter in a few words.

We hear expressly of the office of a bishop, of ¹ *Tim.* iii. 1. the office of a deacon, and of the title of an elder; ¹ *Tim.* iii. and it must be remarked, that *elder* is the literal ^{10, 13.} translation of *presbyter*, which, after the French, we have abbreviated into priest, so that these three titles, Bishop, or overseer, Priest, or elder, and Deacon, or minister, existed in primitive times; and if it were quite clear that these terms were always kept distinct, we might think the difficulty solved. That bishops and deacons were distinct, sufficiently appears from the opening of St. Paul's letter to the Philippians; but it must be confessed that the word *elder* is used with some vagueness in Holy Scripture. Sometimes it means the Apostles themselves, as St. John calls ² *John* i. himself an elder, and St. Peter says of himself, "who am also an *elder*," in the very verse in which ¹ *Pet.* v. 1. he speaks with authority to others whom he calls *elders*. Again in the epistle to Titus it appears

Tit. i. 5. that St. Paul gives him directions about ordaining elders; evidently shewing that they were ministers inferior to the office that was filled by Titus. From this interchange of names, some confusion and misapprehension has not unnaturally arisen, and this difficulty is farther increased, because, not only is an apostle called a priest, but a priest is called a bishop, as when St. Paul gave his farewell address to the elders at Miletum. "*Acts* xx. 17. "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you *overseers*," *1 Pet.* v. 2. or bishops. So St. Peter exhorts the elders, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the *oversight* thereof." The apparent difficulty, however, arising from these texts, is solved by a careful attention to the texts themselves. It is over the flock, over their congregations that the elders were overseers, as every priest is an overseer, watching over his congregation as one that must give account; but men having authority to ordain elders, and to charge teachers that they teach no other doctrine, were overseers, or bishops, of the other ministers, as the epistles to Timothy and Titus clearly prove.

There are also other terms, as Evangelists, *Eph.* iv. 11. Prophets, Apostles, Teachers, applied in Scripture to members of the ministry; but these seem rather to indicate their several characters and employments, than to distinguish one office from another.

ther, and are on different occasions applied to the same person. ^{2 Tim. iv. 5.}
^{1 Tim. ii. 7.}
Acts xxi. 8.

Following the spirit of their practice, the Church has always maintained these three orders of the clergy. Ignatius, who lived many years within the time of the Apostles, speaks in every letter of bishops, priests, and deacons; and the same titles are now extant in the Roman, the Greek, the Russo-Greek, and the Anglican branches of the Church. It need not be insisted upon (though highly probable) that Timothy and Titus were in all respects bishops, according to our notions of the office; but they possessed at least temporary authority over other pastors, and, on their removal or recall, others were appointed to succeed them. *Martyred,*
^{107 or 116.}

We are farther taught by ecclesiastical history that without the bishop nothing was done in the Church; and Tertullian traces bishops (in contradistinction to priests) to the time of the Evangelist St. John. Again, as some elucidation of what has gone before, it must be added, that in the present day, the bishop, upon his consecration, does not lose his former office, but is both priest and bishop in his own person. Concluding, then, that the distinction between bishops, priests, and deacons, now clearly understood, is consistent with the manifestation of Divine will traceable in Holy Scripture, and is authorized by the practice of all antiquity, we *De Præscript, c. 33.*
See Tertul. de Bapt. c. 17.

return to the course of history from which we have digressed.

It is recorded by St. Luke, immediately after his notice of the ordination of the deacons, that the word of God increased, and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of *the priests* were obedient to the faith. This was, doubtless, an important triumph. It is manifest that the education, the prejudices, and the interests of the priests were all opposed to this acceptance of the Christian doctrine. It is also confessed that their education was generally of a superior character, but more particularly in the study of the ancient Scriptures they were thoroughly versed. Their testimony accordingly is of no slight weight, that, in his death and resurrection, Jesus of Nazareth had proved himself the Christ of God.

A.D. 35. These successes called the attention of the Jewish authorities; and the zeal and diligence of one of the deacons, Stephen, especially aroused the anger of some foreign Jews who were then at Jerusalem. They appear to have entered into public disputation with him, but not being able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake, they suborned men who accused him of blasphemy against Moses, the law, and the temple.

His defence proves a curious and interesting

confirmation of the history of the Old Testament, *Acts vii. 2.* although his object was simply to show, that he had not blasphemed the law in exalting the promise, inasmuch as their own books declared the promise to have been given to the fathers before the law: That he had not blasphemed Moses in preaching Christ, seeing that Moses himself had prophesied of Him: And that he had not blasphemed the temple, since the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands. *Acts vii. 5. See Gal. iii. 17. Acts vii. 37. Acts vii. 48.*

The result however of his arguments, pointed as they were by a fearless reproof of continued faithlessness, was a sudden uproar, which caused him to be stoned.

His faith and his charity in this most trying hour, have exalted him to the same rank in worth, that he happened to possess in time, and caused him to be called with truth—the first of the martyrs.

A general persecution of the Christians, or, as St. Luke calls them, the Church, followed this event. The Apostles alone remained in Jerusalem. The rest of the believers were now scattered abroad throughout Judea and Samaria, but thus the word was more extensively preached.

So wonderful is the providence of God in overruling the designs of men to his own gracious purposes; and thus, even in this early stage of its history, he gave a manifest sign that the

blood of martyrs should be the seed of His Church.

Then Philip, the deacon, preached with great success in Samaria. Others travelled unto Phœnicia, Antioch, and the island of Cyprus; and we may fairly infer that some, as Ananias and many others, went to Damascus; while it has been thought, from a passage in the epistle to the
ch. xvi. 7. Romans, that some, as Andronicus and Junia, had gone as far as Rome.

The most conspicuous among the persecutors of the Christians was a young man named Saul, whose first introduction was at the stoning of Stephen, when the witnesses laid down their
Acts vii. 58. clothes at his feet. And if any surprise be felt that one of Tarsus, a city three hundred miles from Jerusalem, should chance to be present, the difficulty is reconciled by the undesigned coincidence of a previous notice, which declared that some of
Acts vi. 9. those who disputed with Stephen were "of Cilicia."

On the detailed account of Saul's conversion, we need not now delay longer than to point out the three occasions in which the circumstances of that event are at length recorded, and to suggest a key by which their apparent inconsistencies may be easily reconciled. In essentials they precisely correspond, and the reason for the various introductions and omissions we shall immediately understand, if, while reading each

account, we place ourselves in the position of the speaker or narrators, and bear in mind the history of St. Paul and the character of those addressed.

The first account is a simple record by the historian, in the natural order of events, and re-*A.D.* 38. lates such matters as might come to a historian's *Acts ix. 1—* knowledge, without touching upon the private ^{22.} feelings or experience of the individuals principally affected. The second is the defence made by Paul himself before the people of Jerusalem, and *Acts xxii.* delivered in the Hebrew tongue; in which he ^{4 to 16.} introduces, upon the highest possible authority, viz. a vision from God (in consequence of their prejudices), his commission to preach to the Gentiles. And the third forms an important feature in his address before Agrippa, where he *Acts xxvi.* passes over some of the details that would be less ^{12—20.} interesting to his hearers, and attributes his conversion and commission directly to a voice from heaven.

It moreover happens that the principal facts are confirmed by the first chapter of his Epistle to the Galatians, and by the testimony of Barnabas. *Acts ix. 27.* And these are all that we are concerned to know, for if they were true, his conversion was miraculous, and he was an Apostle of God, and could not have purposed to deceive in other matters. The confirmation thus afforded is more valuable than men are inclined to consider, in consequence

of finding the two works in the same volume: but as the Epistle was written by a different person from him who wrote the history, it ought to have all the importance of a separate and independent witness.

The critical study of the Epistles of St. Paul would afford many valuable confirmations of each other, and of the history of the Acts of the Apostles, by their undesigned coincidences; and in justice to the memory of a mighty champion for the faith, it should be noticed that such critical examination may be found most successfully pursued in the *Horæ Paulinæ* of Archdeacon Paley.

The narrative seems to hurry us from Saul's conversion, his preaching Jesus, and consequent persecution in Damascus, to his arrival at Jerusalem, as if all happened within a few weeks or months; but the phrase "after many days" once occurs, and the Epistle to the Galatians, already quoted, corrects the false impression, and informs us that he passed three years in Arabia and Damascus before he went up to Jerusalem.

- A.D.* 41. He was then introduced by Barnabas to the Apostles, at least to Peter, and James, the Lord's brother, who were at first unwilling to receive him, not believing that he was a disciple; and
- Gal.* i. 18. after remaining with them fifteen days, in consequence of being in danger from some foreign Jews, he retired to his native city, Tarsus, in Cilicia.

Then had the churches rest, and by the blessing of God this rest was as beneficial to their edification, or building up, in faith, as the season of suffering had been useful for their original institution.

During this period the Apostles seem to have *A.D.* 41. made visits, or a circuit of visits, from Jerusalem to confirm the faith of the believers. In one of these, while at Joppa, St. Peter was taught by a vision, and by the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Cornelius and his friends, that the truth of Christ was to be not only, as he had previously supposed, the glory of His people Israel, but also a light to lighten the *Gentiles*. Accordingly he admitted them into the Church of Christ; and the particulars of this transaction are well worthy of our notice, first, because they confirm to us and to our children, the blessed privileges of the Gospel, and, secondly, because they declare baptism to be the proper method of admission into the true Church. Moreover, they affirm that it is not enough to believe ourselves baptized by the Spirit, but we must be also baptized with water; contrary indeed to the opinion of some moderns, but consistently with our Lord's declaration, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, *John* iii. 5. he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

In connection with this allusion to the baptism in the house of Cornelius, it is seasonable

*Acts xvi.
15. and 33.
1 Cor. i. 16.*

to introduce the mention of somewhat similar baptisms performed afterwards by St. Paul; in the house of Lydia, in the prison at Philippi, and of the household of Stephanas.

It has been inferred from the terms in which these baptisms are mentioned, that infant children were then admitted into the privileges of this sacrament: and from the inconvenience that would have attended immersion, when there were so many at a time, and particularly in the middle of the night, as in the house of the jailor, some have argued that sprinkling with water was probably substituted for dipping upon those occasions. In the former at least of these inferences, there is much of truth and reason; the latter seems merely conjectural: but these questions are of light importance if we acknowledge an authority in the Church to regulate in all matters of form, provided she adhere to the faith and spirit of the Apostles; and if we allow the practice of the early Church to be the best comment on Apostolic practice, in the absence of express directions.

It is manifest, that in making converts and requiring a profession of repentance and faith, the Apostles addressed themselves only to adults; and in recording baptisms, the sacred historian might have been charged with trifling if he had instanced the number of children baptized as in

proof of the success of a religion which appealed to reason and the feelings. But nothing in Scripture is inconsistent with the idea that they did baptize infants; and, besides the argument from circumcision, the Church has ever interpreted our Lord's invitation to little children, to mean a summons to this sacrament. But what says the testimony of the earliest Christian writers? It appears that the Church at first regarded all persons, without any restriction as to nation, sex, or age, as capable of baptism. And that children were not excluded from a participation in this rite is evident from a celebrated passage in Irenæus, in his treatise against Heresies; from allusions to the prevailing practice of the Church, in the writings of Tertullian and Cyprian, the former of whom disapproved of infant baptism; and from the controversy which arose on the subject in the African Church.

Bapt. Serv.

Mark x. 14.

Riddle, Ch. Ant. p. 445.

Ad. Hæres. ii. 22.

With respect to the other question, that of immersion, or of sprinkling with water, it is not denied that the practice originally was (as the word baptize indicates) dipping in water; but the alteration in practice has been made on account of the difference of climate, and for the sake of health; together with a faithful reliance on the efficacy of the sacrament, on account of its institution by our Lord, and under the impression that a drop of water, so consecrated, is no less effica-

cious to its purpose than the most copious effusion would have been; according to the practical exposition which our Saviour made when he washed only his disciples' feet, and declared that they were every whit clean.

John xiii.
10.

Nevertheless, upon these grounds at least, the Baptists have no excuse for separating from us; *See Rubrics* for the Church of England directs dipping if the child may well endure it, though a discretionary power is left with the minister to substitute in its place the pouring of water upon him.

A.D. 41. Although, from the circumstances that attended the introduction of Cornelius to the Christian faith, and the simultaneous testimony that it was the will of God that salvation should be sent unto the Gentiles, Cornelius has been commonly spoken of as the first Gentile convert, it is far from improbable that other teachers had held less scruple on this subject than St. Peter, and had admitted Gentiles to the sacrament of baptism. The case of the Ethiopian nobleman would be express upon this subject if there were not grounds for suspecting, from his being found studying Isaiah, that he was a Jewish proselyte.

This admission of the Gentiles was, however, the subject of much animadversion and dissension at the time. The exclusive privileges of the Jewish nation were thus broken up, and in consequence many of the Jewish converts to Christianity

were unwilling to receive it. Even Peter was so totally unprepared for such a doctrine, that a separate vision was vouchsafed before he was called upon to take an active part in their admission. And the Epistles of St. Paul plainly teach us that the course of the free and full Gospel was scarcely less impeded by judaizing Christians, than by open infidels. The Apostles, however, particularly Paul and Peter, being themselves convinced, steadily maintained this doctrine. The letter to the Galatians is especially written to counteract the mistaken notions of such as made the observance of the Mosaic law of equal importance with the faith of the Gospel. And the writer of it clearly shows, that they who thus add to the doctrine which Christ preached, make his Gospel another thing from that which he delivered. *Gal. i. 6.*

But happily for us, we have not only the views *A.D. 51.* of two or three individuals among the Apostles, but the recorded opinion of the whole Church upon this matter. In consequence of the trouble caused to the Gentiles by certain Jewish teachers insisting upon the observance of the ceremonial laws, the Apostles were requested to pronounce judgment. Accordingly, a council of the Apostles and Elders was summoned: Simon Peter, or, as he is here called, Simeon, declared how God at *Acts xv. 14.* first did visit the Gentiles; Paul and Barnabas

testified what miracles God had wrought among the Gentiles by them ; and James, the brother or cousin of our Lord, (who appears to have been bishop at Jerusalem, and as such to have presided at this meeting,) gave his sentence in favour of
Acts xv. 19, not troubling the Gentiles that were turned unto
 20. God, but of simply urging them to abstain from meats offered unto idols, from fornication, from things strangled, and from blood. Accordingly, a letter to that effect was sent among the converts to their great joy and consolation.

Although Peter had been made the instrument for the first calling of the Gentiles, St. Paul is more peculiarly entitled *their* Apostle; first, because at the time of his conversion it was revealed, “*I*
Acts xxii. will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles;” and,
 21. secondly, because he did, in fact, devote his life emphatically to that object.

It will be interesting briefly to notice his several journeys, with the success that attended upon each, though for the details we must look to the Scriptures themselves.

A.D. 44. It appears, then, that about six years after his conversion, St. Paul passed a year at Antioch, in
Acts xi. 26, company with Barnabas. They thence brought a charitable contribution to their brethren at Jerusalem, who were suffering from a famine, that had been predicted by Agabus, (the same who afterwards predicted Paul’s being taken prisoner,) and
Acts xxi. 10

returned to Antioch, taking with them John Mark, nephew of Barnabas.

But the first missionary journey was after this. *A.D.* 45. Being authorized by the Church at Antioch, Saul *Acts* xlii. 2. and Barnabas visited Cyprus, which, we may remember, was the native place of Barnabas, and there Saul appears to have assumed the name of Paul. Probably the change was made to shake off the odium which attended on his original name as a persecutor of the Church, and that particular name was assumed out of compliment to Sergius Paulus. At least we know that such a practice was by no means uncommon amongst the Romans, especially where any patronage or protection, as in this case, was afforded. The Apostles then visited a few cities on the continent, and *Acts* xiv. 26. shortly returned to Antioch.

In the interval, before the next journey, they *A.D.* 51. attended the council at Jerusalem, of which we *Acts* xv. have already spoken.

A difference of opinion about taking Mark with *A.D.* 52. them, (Paul censuring his former desertion at *Acts* xv. 37, Perga in Pamphylia, and Barnabas willing to ex-^{sc.}cuse an error in his sister's son,) occasioned a wider propagation of the truth; for whilst Barnabas and Mark went to Cyprus, Paul with Silas traversed Syria and Cilicia confirming the churches. Having met with Timothy and with Luke, the *Acts* xvi. 1. great Apostle crossed the Archipelago into Greece, *verse* 10, 11.

Acts xvii. preached the true God to the idolatrous Athenians, and established a flourishing church at
 22.
ch. xviii. 1. Corinth, one of the largest and most learned of the Grecian cities.

A.D. 54. Having returned to Jerusalem for one of the great feasts, and having again visited the Church
Acts xviii. at Antioch, he commenced a third journey,—traversed once more the whole of Asia Minor, and
 22. took up his residence at the idolatrous city of

Acts xix. 10 Ephesus for more than two years.

During this interval the word of God mightily grew and prevailed; as was especially proved in
Acts xix. 19 that place, by the burning of the books on magic at a very considerable sacrifice. After again visit-
A.D. 58. ing Macedonia, and the other churches in Greece,
Acts xxi. 15 he returned by sea to Jerusalem.

The enmity of the judaizing Christians subjected Paul to farther trials, and he suffered a protracted
Acts xxiv. imprisonment under Felix and under Festus, until
 27. an appeal to the Emperor of Rome gave him the
A.D. 60. opportunity of preaching to the inhabitants of that great city. It was surely the providence of God that sent him thither. A long conceived desire to visit the metropolis of the world, and a natural anxiety to avoid Jerusalem, where his enemies sought his life, induced Paul to appeal unto Cæsar. Thus was the purpose of God effected, for the Emperor (Nero) allowed him on
A.D. 61. his arrival to live in his own hired house; so that,

DEATH OF PAUL, AND CRUCIFIXION OF PETER. 57

with only the inconvenience of having one arm *Acts xxviii.*
fastened by a chain to that of a soldier, he enjoyed *Acts xxviii.*
for two years the converse of his Christian friends, *Eph. vi. 20.*
and the privilege of publicly delivering his doc- *A.D. 63.*
trines.

We have no farther the guidance of St. Luke, but ecclesiastical history informs us that Paul lived for some years after this time, and we cannot doubt that he was constantly engaged in preaching the Gospel in different countries, although we have not sufficient grounds for asserting, as some say, that he founded churches in France, in Spain, and in Britain. It is more probable that he visited the Colossians, Philippians, and Corinthians; and having stopped at Troas and at Crete, proceeded to Rome, where he was put to death. Popular *A.D. 66.* clamour had been much excited, and a violent persecution of the Christians was patronised, if not commenced, by Nero. Tertullian relates of this notorious tyrant, that he was the first to draw the imperial sword against the Christians; and it is certain that he charged them with having destroyed by fire a great portion of the city, of which crime he himself is strongly suspected to have been the author.

On the same day on which Paul was beheaded, Peter is reported to have been crucified, with his head downwards; but notwithstanding Nero's acknowledged hostility against the Christians, he

does not appear to have been the immediate author of their deaths; for at the time of their martyrdom he was in Greece, and the government

Dion Cass- was committed to Helius, his representative.
sius, 69.12.

Acts xxii.
28.

The difference in their punishment is attributed to their different circumstances. Paul was a free citizen, and on that account relieved from the ignominy of the cross; but Peter was scarcely less odious to their prejudices as a Jew, than as a Christian: while the peculiarity of the attitude in which Peter met his death, was agreeable to his own request,—prompted, we must think, by a sense of his unworthiness to suffer in precisely the same manner with his Heavenly Master.

LECTURE III.

The History continued until the end of the First Century.

It is highly probable that the foundation of the Church in Rome was long before the time when either St. Paul or St. Peter visited that city.

The honour of being its founder has been popularly attributed to the latter; but St. Paul had, at least, an equal share, if he did not bear the greater proportion, in establishing it. Evidently both were actively engaged at Rome, maintaining the truth as it is in Jesus, and there is no ground for believing that St. Paul acknowledged any superior authority in his brother Apostle. We know that on another occasion he refused to be guided by St. Peter's opinion, and *Gal. ii. 11.* even withstood him to the face. Moreover, the sacred historian speaks of him as if he acted independently of all other individuals, and was only submissive to the voice of the Church; while in his own Epistle to the Romans, we find no hint of reference to any higher human power; but he

writes as one having authority, and even gives directions to those at a distance, who did not fully understand the doctrines of Christianity which they had professed their willingness to embrace. Besides, it has been ascertained that St. Peter did not visit Rome until the time of Nero, when a church was already established there, and had been addressed in a letter by St. Paul.

In order to explain the difficulty which exists about the successor of the Apostles in the bishopric of that important church, it has been suggested that St. Paul preached specially to the Gentiles, while St. Peter confined his attention to the Jews; and that while Linus was the successor of the latter, Cletus, or Anacletus, succeeded the former. When, however, Linus fell, during Nero's persecution, Cletus took the charge of the whole Church, and was afterwards succeeded by Clement, immortalized as a fellow-

Philip. iv. labourer with St. Paul.

3.

As very little authentic information has come down to us respecting the travels of the greater part of the Apostles, we pass them over with the observation, that they seem to have diverged in various directions, and to have devoted their lives freely to the cause they had embraced. By this means they effected so wide a propagation of the truth, that St. Paul was able to write to the Colossians during his first imprisonment at Rome,

that the Gospel had been preached to every creature which is under heaven ; and if this statement be not pressed literally to its full extent, it is at least true of the then civilized world, as well as of many countries which were still barbarous.

The veil of obscurity that hangs over the exertions of many of these eminently zealous and highly favoured men, teaches an impressive lesson to all who are engaged in the same holy cause. Let not those who are eager for the advancement of God's truth be unduly influenced by the praise of men, or by the hope of future fame. Even the chosen companions of our Lord were slighted and contemned, and the records of their valuable lives have been forgotten or confused. Surely this might teach men not to be spoiled by applause, nor intimidated by censure ; to seek only the silent approval of their own conscience, and to be assured that they are doing the work of God as He would have it done. Doubtless, in his own good time, God will bless their endeavours, and they shall not lose their reward.

While, however, the Apostles were spreading the Gospel of Peace among all nations, a very different scene was being enacted in their native city. Jerusalem was beginning to reap the fruit of her crime in the rejection and crucifixion of her Lord. She was no longer a city at unity in herself, nor protected by the arm of Divine favour ; but, agi-

tated by civil discord, the prey of faction and of famine, she was beleaguered by the powerful Roman, whose yoke she had vainly endeavoured to throw off. The hedge that once encompassed her was taken away, and the wall that God had built around her was trodden down. Her many houses were desolate; her honourable men were famished, and her multitude dried up with thirst. A nation from far came with speed, swiftly; and Titus Vespasian, not knowing what he did, executed the wrath of God upon this infatuated and rebellious people.

The temple itself is reported to have been burnt by what is called an accident, or by the folly of an individual, against the wishes of the Roman General, and notwithstanding his exertions to preserve it; and the Roman plough afterwards passed over its foundations in token of victory, so that literally one stone was not left upon another.

Luke xix.
43, 44.

Interesting as this record is, from the proof that it gives of the inspiration of the prophecies of the Lord Jesus, there is another and peculiar interest connected with the siege of Jerusalem on account of the Christian Church assembled there. Whether they were called Nazarenes, or Galileans, terms of reproach used among the Jews; or Believers, Disciples, Saints, and Brethren, as they were accounted amongst themselves, there must

have been many who watched with anxiety the threatened signs as they increased around them. Wars and rumours of war sounded in their ears. Even miraculous changes in the heavenly bodies are said to have taken place, and they must have eagerly questioned of one another, and of Symeon, who had succeeded his brother James as their bishop, whether this were not the time to flee to the mountains. At length the permission was given to come out from among them and be separate; and as Lot went out of Sodom, so, with grateful thanksgiving for their own deliverance, and with solemn thoughts on the fate of their fellow-citizens left behind, Symeon and the people of the Lord made their escape to Pella. This *A.D.* 66. little Zoar, graciously provided for them as a city of refuge, was about one hundred miles from Jerusalem, on the eastern side of the river Jordan; and the escape to it was effected during an interval of the siege, so unexpected, that we should call it unaccountable, if we did not recognize the finger of God in their deliverance.

As some consolation for the regret which they naturally experienced in the destruction of the city and of the temple of the Great King, they must have read therein the clear fulfilment of their Lord's predictions, as well as the wrath of God taking vengeance on them who had refused to believe the Gospel. With this additional con-

firmation of their hopes, they manifestly acquired additional zeal to propagate the true religion, and lifted up their heads, believing their redemption drawing nigh. Accordingly, the Gospel made great progress; many of the less infatuated Jews, softened by suffering and convinced of their former error, embraced the hopes of Christianity; and neither Vespasian nor his son Titus molested the Christians on account of their religion.

*Burton's
Ch. Ch.
p. 151.*

Very little is known of the history of any particular church; but the four cities, which afterwards became the most celebrated in the Christian world, and which took precedence over all other sees, have preserved the names of their bishops from the beginning. These were, first, Jerusalem, which had for its first bishop James, called the brother of our Lord, and was, without dispute, the mother of all the churches; second, Antioch, whose church was apparently founded by St. Paul, of which Evodius was the first bishop, and which, as situated in the capital of a province, naturally acquired an importance over those in inferior cities. The third was Rome, where the church, having been confirmed by the joint exertions of Paul and Peter, and being in the metropolis of the world, soon rose into great estimation and authority; and the fourth was Alexandria, in which famous city the evangelist St. Mark founded

a church that was much respected by the neighbouring congregations.

In these historical facts there is so far from warrant for Rome's exclusive supremacy, that we find her stripped of the favourite pretension to priority. Nor is there any ground for thinking that in the early days any one church assumed authority over others, except so far as from their greater age or experience, their more perfect records, or their wiser bishops, they were enabled to give kind and prudent counsel.

The twelfth Emperor, Domitian, was to the Church of Christ, as well as to the people of Rome, a second Nero, although neither had just cause of accusation. The Jews indeed, and some judaizing professors were often guilty of revolts, but the Christians uniformly, according to the teaching of their Lord, rendered unto Cæsar the *Matt. xxii.* things that were Cæsar's. They claimed no ex-^{21.}emption on account of either his infidelity or his immorality, but paid him respect due to one appointed to his office by the providence of God, however unworthy of it. In like manner with respect to their private lives, they were as a class so conspicuous for unity and godly love, that it became a proverb, "See how these Christians love one another;" while their moral conduct was so exemplary, that even their enemies found no fault in them.

Upon the details of Domitian's cruelties, and upon the constancy of the sufferers we need not dwell, though it must not be forgotten that it was this emperor's decree that banished the venerable evangelist, St. John, to Patmos, where he was probably sentenced to the ordinary occupation of his fellow-exiles, digging in the mines. More-
Euseb. Ecc. Hist. iii. 20. over, the reader of Eusebius would be well rewarded by the interesting account of his Herod-like jealousy of the family of Jesus, and of the examination before him of two kinsmen of our Lord, who were grandsons of St. Jude, though the story rests on the somewhat doubtful authority of Hegesippus.

We cannot, however, forbear to notice that in the mental and bodily sufferings of these two persecutors of the Church, we seem to read signs of God's vindication of his truth. Nero, maddened by his passions, and irritated by the desertion of his followers, and by the revolt of his legions, was ultimately driven in despair to cause his own destruction. Domitian, after sacrificing innumerable lives without remorse, was himself murdered by his own household; and after his death he was sentenced by the decree of the Senate to perpetual ignominy. It is true that many other Roman emperors lost their lives by seditions and revolts; and that these two tyrants deserved their deaths for other crimes besides

their persecution of the Church; but at the same time it must be acknowledged, that, as they exceeded all others in blasphemy and in bloodshed of the Christians, so do they stand forth from history as the most depraved of men; so do they appear above all others to have been given up to the fury of their evil passions; and to have been sentenced by both God and man to signal punishment, and to eternal infamy.

It is now our painful duty to notice some of the errors, which, almost from the first, endeavoured to corrupt the truth. In this particular the history of the Church affords another illustration of the truth of our Lord's doctrine, with respect both to God's mode of governing the world, and to the perpetual activity of an evil hostile spirit. No sooner had God sown the seed of his Church, than an enemy finding he could not uproot it, *Mat. xlii.* planted tares also. By perverting some things ^{24.} that were simply said, and by wresting to a different meaning things that were in their nature *2 Peter iii.* hard to be understood, he misled many of the ^{16.} unstable, even in the Apostles' time. Paul, and Peter, and James, and John, and Jude, all lament and endeavour to correct these evils. Nevertheless it was the will of God that both wheat and tares, the truth and its perversion, should continue and grow together until the harvest. Then will his reapers, the angels, gather the good

Jude 4.

fruit, those who have held fast the faith once delivered to the saints, into his precious garner : but the tares, the corrupters and perverters of the truth, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, them will they gather into bundles to burn them.

The earliest error appears to have been that of judaizing Christians, who were willing to receive Christianity as an addition to the Jewish law, but not as the fulfilment of it. The Apostles contended against this mistake, and St. Paul expressly taught that, because these made essential that which Christ had not made so, they preached a different Gospel from that which He had delivered. When they insisted upon the necessary obedience to all the works of the law, they really made those works instrumental to salvation, and thus they contradicted the doctrine that promised life eternal upon the sole condition of faith.

Again, this doctrine of St. Paul, of justification by faith only, was next perverted by false teachers, who affected to believe that the practice of good works was thus superseded, and that in consideration of their profession of Faith, their immoral conduct would be no hindrance to their entering into life. The misapprehension of these men (which might have been corrected by the manifest tendency of the whole of St. Paul's writings,) was

directly opposed by St. James. Though not denying the position that Faith is all-important, this latter writer maintains that Faith must prove itself in action; for he argues that if a mere historical faith were all that is required, then would the devils be saved, but now they believe and tremble.

The chief errors, however, that have stained the name of the first century, were those that were met by the Evangelist St. John, the mighty champion of our Lord's divinity. The other Apostles wrote for the most part either with the purpose of converting unbelievers, or of strengthening converts, whether Jews or Gentiles: but it was left to the later period of St. John's life to correct the errors of men professing Christianity. His Gospel is supposed to have been written mainly to oppose the errors of the Gnostics, the Cerinthians, and the Ebionites, though if he had seen the records of the other Evangelists, he doubtless designed also to supply their omissions. Both of these results have been admirably effected: and some acquaintance with these heresies is absolutely necessary before we can appreciate the force of the opening chapter of his Gospel: a chapter, be it observed, that modern unbelievers have endeavoured to fritter into insignificance, in defiance alike of all testimony of history, and of all rules of criticism.

Gnosticism is said to have originated in that arch-imposter Simon Magus. He denied the human nature of Jesus, believing the Christ, in consequence of indisputable miracles, to be an emanation from God, but maintaining that what seemed to be his body, was only a spirit or a phantom. It is almost needless to observe that this impious notion is directly opposed to the Gospel account of the incarnation of Jesus; to the evidence of the senses to which He condescended to appeal; and to the explicit declarations of the Scriptures: while by denying the fulfilment of the law by *man*, it entirely destroys the efficacy of the Atonement. But it is a striking and an interesting fact, that even the boldness of infidelity itself did not *commence* with denying the divinity of our Lord; concerning that vital point, the first heretics made no question; they denied only that so much perfection, such virtue, power, patience, and suffering, could have become flesh, and dwelt amongst men.

As the records of the Evangelists became better known, and many who had seen Jesus in the body testified of his humanity, the unbelievers were forced from their original ground; but having an evil heart, they took up their position in another subtilty, and affected to divide Jesus and the Christ into two distinct beings, declaring that Jesus was a mere man, but that the Christ was an emanation from God, which descended upon

Jesus at his baptism, and returned to heaven at his crucifixion. The principal supporter of this *A.D.* 96. notion was Cerinthus, of whom it is recorded that he was a man of a very abandoned character. So hateful was he to the sight of St. John, on account of his infidelity and impurity, that upon *Euseb. Ecc. Hist. iii. 2.* once meeting with him at some baths at Ephesus, the Apostle immediately left the place, and called upon his companions, saying, "Make haste and follow me, lest the building fall while Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth, is in it."

The Ebionites were another section of the same order; but they had one peculiarity in their favour, which we desire to believe is inherited by their mistaken followers of modern times: though their religious tenets were erroneous and extravagant, their moral practice was particularly strict: inasmuch, however, as it wanted the right *Art. 13 & 18.* principle, it must be pronounced defective.

Against these errors, as well as against those which followed, the Church loudly protested, exhibiting herself on every occasion a witness for the truth,—whether infidelity would receive too little, or superstition would require too much.

It is no matter of surprise that the Church at Jerusalem, particularly on her return from Pella, should thus stand forth as the pillar and ground of the truth, for she had seen the most awful calamity that had ever befallen any people,

and she was conscious that the remnant had been saved only in consideration of their faith in Jesus. Our wonder rather is that any should so soon have been removed from Him that called them into the grace of Christ. The mournful fact reminds us of the power and malignity of Satan, while it exhorts the Church, in every age, to watch and pray lest it enter into temptation. But in this subject, though full of sad and humiliating thoughts, there is nothing to shake the confidence of an humble Christian. These men failed because they would be wise above what was written, exalted reason above revelation, and prided themselves upon their knowledge, as their assumption of the term, *gnostic*, indicates.

Gal. i. 6. Their failure should warn others not vainly to endeavour to find out God by searching. Rather than run the risk of losing themselves in darkness, while seeking after light, men should bless God, that though He has kept many things in his mysteries and his sacraments from the wise and from the prudent, he has revealed them unto babes. We are expressly desired to become as little children if we would enter into the kingdom of heaven; and the characteristics of a child are these,—ignorance, humility, docility, simpleness of mind, and purity of heart: how unlike the conceit and pride of the miscalled philosopher, who would measure the wisdom of Om-

Job xi. 7.

niscience by the scanty rule of his own partial knowledge.

But in the existence of these heresies themselves, we happily find confirmation of the Scriptures, for they are precisely such errors as had been predicted by St. Paul, and, together with the warning, that Apostle seems to have declared the reason for their being permitted to arise: "There must be also heresies amongst you, that ^{1 Cor. xi. 19.} they which are approved may be made manifest among you."

Of the personal history of St. John nothing is certainly known from the time he was present *A.D.* 46. at the great council of Jerusalem, until the latter years of his life, which were spent in Ephesus, or in its neighbourhood. During the intermediate time he is supposed to have been in Judæa, and in Asia Minor, and at length is found officiating as Bishop of Ephesus, after the death of Timothy, who had been murdered in a riot, similar to *A.D.* 97. that described in the Acts of the Apostles, by ^{ch. xix.} the votaries of Diana. Besides the charge of Ephesus, St. John appears to have presided over the six neighbouring churches mentioned in the Revelations—Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. It is also ascertained that he appointed Polycarp bishop of Smyrna; and it has been inferred, from his addressing the angels, probably the bishops, of the

other Churches, that he possessed authority above them. By order of Domitian he was banished to the Isle of Patmos, but on the death of that tyrant he was released by a general order of his successor, Nerva, and he returned to Ephesus. It is supposed that during the few remaining years of his life, he peacefully superintended the Asiatic Churches, and wrote his Gospel and his Epistles for the correction of existing errors, and for *John xx.31* the consolation and instruction of all future generations.

The fact of his life being thus prolonged for the glory of God, and for the furtherance of His religion, has been thought, and not unreasonably, to confirm the implied promise that he should tarry until the Lord should come; but an imperfect view seems to be taken of this prophecy, when its fulfilment is supposed to be realized in the destruction of Jerusalem. That event took place in the year 72, and the date of St. John's death is placed in 98; so that although we recognize a promise, in the remark of our Lord to Peter, respecting this disciple, we suspect that the coming, here predicted, was fulfilled in the coming of his kingdom through the Church. Another suggestion has been put forth by one of the most eloquent of modern divines, viz. that this coming, which was to be a prelude to his death, was realized in that eventful coming with which this

*John xxi.
22.*

Croly.

favoured disciple was emphatically visited, in the apocalyptic visions of the Isle of Patmos.

The arrangement of the volume, which we call the New Testament, has been attributed to this disciple, but upon scarcely sufficient authority. St. John's own works, indeed, were the latest admitted, as stamped by the marks of inspiration, but this was not the result of any individual's influence or opinion. A truer view of the case seems to be, that, upon mutual recommendation and reflection, the various churches decided what should be read amongst them, and what should not be recognized in their public worship. Their disposition evidently was to avoid sanctioning anything that might be found erroneous; and in this anxiety they leaned rather to the excess of care, than to the want of it. Accordingly, while there never was any doubt respecting the admission of the four Gospels, of the Acts, and of most of the Epistles into the canon of Scripture,—St. Paul's letter to the Hebrews, St. Peter's second epistle, the epistles of St. James and of St. Jude, the two latter epistles of St. John, and the Book of the Revelation, were either questioned at the time, or have been since disputed.

The judgment which ultimately determined that these writings also ought to be received, has obtained greater confidence from the manifest signs of discretion which the Church exercised

on that occasion. It not only rejected a great variety of professing gospels and histories of our Saviour, published in the second century, but also, through scrupulous conscientiousness, declined the epistles of Barnabas, and of Clement of Rome, which must be acknowledged to be highly valuable.

It will, however, be interesting to record a few particulars with respect to each of the works once doubted, for it will thus be shown that the objections which at the time were only partial, have since been fully answered.

Hist. Eccl. as in the canon by Eusebius, and by Jerome ;
iii. 25. it is found in all the ancient canons of the Greek and Latin Churches, and it has been quoted as authoritative by fathers of the second and third centuries.

The authorship of the epistle to the Hebrews has been disputed, from the want of the inscription of St. Paul with his own name, and from a difference of style. This difference of style is sufficiently accounted for by its subject, and by the circumstances of the persons to whom it was addressed. In all probability it was originally written in the Hebrew tongue ; and it is certainly consistent with St. Paul's readiness to become "all things to all men," that, being addressed to the Hebrew people, it should abound in allusions to

such phrases, laws, and customs, as were familiar to them. The internal evidence of this epistle is *See Echard* very strong; and while one of the fathers says that *b. ii. ch. vi.* "all the Eastern and Greek Churches received *Jerome.* it, and the Latins have followed them," another *Theod.* has blamed the Arians for rejecting it, contrary to the opinion and authority of the Church. Moreover, all the disputes about it appear to have begun in the third century, and to have vanished in the fifth.

The objection to the second epistle of St. Peter, on account of a supposed difference of style, is answered by the inscription and by its internal evidence, especially by the writer's allusion to his presence at the miraculous scene of our Lord's *2 Peter i.* transfiguration. *16—18.*

St. Jude's epistle was doubted, because of its *Echard's* reference to two apocryphal books, (the Ascension *Eccl. Hist.* of Moses, and Enoch,) but Eusebius says that *b. ii. ch. viii.* most churches received it, and before the end of the fourth century it was universally acknowledged. Its authority has also been confirmed by Origen, and in the councils of Laodicea and of Carthage.

The second and third epistles of St. John were longer in dispute, but *there* also internal evidence is in their favour, and, since the end of the fourth century, both fathers and councils have unani-

mously agreed to receive them as the writings of the beloved disciple.

The authorship of the book of the Revelation was questioned on account of a difference in its style from St. John's acknowledged writings; but that difference is well accounted for, by the difference of the subject, and by the peculiar circumstances under which it was committed to writing. While warm with the inspiration of God, the venerable exile naturally wrote with more than usual force and fervour, and these are amongst its chief characteristics. Scarcely any one since the fourth century has presumed to question it, but we have stronger testimony than the voice of the fathers. The history of ages, then revealed to the favoured eye of the prophet, has fully proved that his pen was guided by the Spirit of Omniscience. Not alone the records of time, the downfall of nations, and the Church in the wilderness, have confirmed this to be the word of Divine inspiration, but the Son of Perdition, the Man of Sin, the Woman of Scarlet, have borne their unwilling testimony to the same incontrovertible truth.

In this brief summary of the events of the first century of Christianity, we perceive that the propagation of the Gospel had already commenced, and very extensively prevailed. The knowledge of the Lord had been received in Cæsar's house-

hold, and the kingdom of Christ had been proclaimed more widely than the empire of the Romans. With one Lord, one faith, one baptism, there were in the East, in India; in the West, in Britain; in the South, in Carthage and Africa; and in the North, in Scythia, members of the one Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church, who had learned to bow at the name of the Lord Jesus, and to call themselves Christians.

LECTURE IV.

The Propagation of Christianity till the Time of Constantine the Great ; together with some Remarks respecting Tradition, the Fathers, and the Payment of the Clergy.

UPON reading the history of the second and third centuries of the Christian æra, we are forcibly struck by the providential care exhibited in the maintenance and propagation of the truth. As in the first establishment of the Church by apparently insufficient means, the preaching of a supposed peasant of Galilee and his twelve humble followers, in opposition to prejudices and powers, to Jews and Greeks, to temporal interests and carnal passions, we were ready to acknowledge "it is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes;" so, in its subsequent continuance, growth, and extension, amid persecutions and heresies, in despite of imprisonments and martyrdoms, we admire the over-ruling care which has brought good out of threatened evil, and we own that the "ways of God are not as our ways."

If the churches had rest, a state of peace was

highly beneficial to the new religion, and mightily grew the Word of God, and prevailed. On the other hand, did persecutions arise, the Christians flying for their lives carried their opinions into distant countries. Were the bishops suffered to live, they wrote defences of Christianity, they preached with boldness and fidelity, they consecrated churches, they ordained elders in every city. Were they condemned to death, the Church was watered by the blood of its saints ; and willing sufferers, beneath the devouring sword, and amidst the burning flame, in the jaws of the lion, and from the degrading cross, bore witness to the truth.

Early in the second century, Symeon, bishop of Jerusalem, was accused by the Gnostics before Atticus, governor of Syria, as a dangerous person, on account of his descent from David ; and after being subjected to an examination by torture for seven days, he terminated his sufferings on the cross.

Another illustrious martyr of that time was Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, who had been personally acquainted with the Apostles Peter, Paul, and John. When Trajan, on his way to make *A.D. 107.* war with Parthia, visited Antioch, he found that city in a state of great excitement, and he consented that the bishop should be sent to Rome to be exposed to wild beasts in the amphitheatre. *Hieron. de viris illust. c. xvi.*

*Burton,
Lect. 14.*

Accordingly, Ignatius suffered in the winter of the same year ; but having stopped at Smyrna on his journey, he had the satisfaction of meeting Polycarp, also a disciple of St. John, and he found time to write to the different Churches several epistles, of which seven, though perhaps interpolated, are still extant, among the works of the apostolical fathers.

A.D. 110

A very famous letter to the Emperor Trajan from the younger Pliny, a Roman of considerable talent and character, the proprætor of Bithynia, proves that the "new religion" had already shaken the altars of idolatry, and it speaks (as does also the Emperor's reply) of the violent persecution to which all who refused to abjure their new opinions were subjected by the Roman authorities.

Notwithstanding these lamentable checks, rendered more lamentable by the fact that the persecutors, Trajan and Pliny, were men of otherwise amiable dispositions and just characters, the progress of Christianity was not materially impeded ; for the wars in which Trajan was engaged withdrew his attention from this subject, and the unjust martyrdom of Symeon and of Ignatius, together with their patient fortitude, stimulated the zeal and exertions of their followers.

A.D. 117.

Hadrian, the successor of Trajan, though sometimes ranked as a persecutor, was induced to interfere for the protection of the Christians

against wanton and malicious informers, and he prohibited punishment, except they should be convicted of some positive violation of the law. It is, however, probable, that he was influenced neither by respect for the new opinions, nor by any fear of their supplanting his own religion, but simply by a sense of abstract justice, which would not punish men who were guilty of no crime.

But many of the heathens, being stung with jealousy at the rapid progress of Christianity, began to persecute its professors more systematically and more cruelly.

The makers of images, as in the case of Demetrius the silversmith of Ephesus, were alarmed at the blow thus given to idolatry. The populace in every town were attached to the pomp and splendour of the sacrifices and public games, which seemed in danger of being stopped if the simple religion of the Christians were to be adopted. The Romans had also introduced into every country a taste for the barbarous and bloody spectacles which were exhibited in the amphitheatre. Men were trained to fight with wild beasts, or criminals were condemned to be exposed to them as a punishment. It was easy to decide that Christianity was itself a crime, and thus to secure a constant supply of criminals whose shrieks and sufferings would give a zest to the unnatural amusement of the spectators of these

*Burton's
Chr. Ch.*

games. The philosophers, as they were called, proved greater enemies to the truth than either Roman emperors or a barbarous populace. They attacked it with the weapons of sophistry and ridicule, and either from designed misrepresentations, or from ignorance of its true character, accused it of innumerable absurdities and impieties. Even those attacks, though injurious, inasmuch as they condemned to torture and to death many who were irreproachable, were beneficial in the result; for they caused many replies, which exposed the follies of Paganism, and maintained the doctrine once delivered to the saints. It is an invincible argument for the truth of our religion, that it has never shrunk from the charges brought by its opponents, but has courted investigation; and the more closely its doctrines have been examined, the more plainly has their heavenly origin been demonstrated.

The errors of a false philosophy, however, had unhappily blended themselves with the truth; and the spurious religion of the Gnostics proves how dangerous it is to swerve to the right hand or to the left in attempting to expound divine things, and how sure a sign of folly to presume to be wise above what is written. In their anxiety to accommodate their new belief to the old notions of philosophy, or to the former practices of Paganism, the essential truths of Christianity were

lost in a cloud of mysticism. Tares were thus sown amidst the wheat; and the errors of the second century were the fruitful source of many future corruptions.

It is pleasing to turn from such allusions, to the constancy of men like Justin and Polycarp, who, *Ob. A. D.* in the age of the Antonines, received the crown ^{166.} of martyrdom. To the former of these, the pious and learned apologist of Christianity, the surname of Martyr has been uniformly and emphatically given, as a distinction acquired by the extremity of his sufferings, and the intrepidity with which he bore them. Hitherto, the title of Martyrs, or Witnesses, had been applied to all who in any way suffered for their profession of the faith; but about this time a distinction seems to have been made between such as suffered only imprisonment and torture, and those who sealed their testimony with their blood.

The death of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, was of so peculiar a character,—so well illustrates the power of faith, and so expressly urges others to be faithful even unto the end, that it deserves to be recorded at some length.

The Proconsul, in respect to his old age, entreated him to disguise his name; but he proclaimed aloud that he was Polycarp, and the trial proceeded. “Swear!” cried the heathen assembled in the theatre, “Swear by the genius of

Caesar; retract, and say, 'Away with the godless!'" The old man gazed in sorrow at the frantic crowd, and said, with eyes uplifted towards heaven, "Away with the godless!" The Proconsul urged him farther,—“Swear, and I release thee;—blaspheme Christ.” The venerable prelate made no other reply than this; “Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He has done me no injury; how then can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour.”

It had been intended that he should be exposed to wild beasts; and the barbarous shout “To the lion!” resounded through the building. It was however thought too late in the day for such a spectacle, and it was decided that he should be burned. A fire was soon kindled, and the Jews were observed to be assisting the heathen in this work of cruelty; but as, from some cause or other, the flames delayed to consume the body, an executioner terminated the martyr's sufferings with the sword.

The interest of this record is increased to such
Rev. ii. 10. as bear in mind the words which St. John addressed to Polycarp, as angel, or bishop of the Church in Smyrna;—words which appear to have applied no less to him individually than to the whole Church over which he was permitted to preside; and therefore words which must have nerved the constancy of the venerable priest in

this his final trial: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

A pupil of this prelate, Irenæus, afterwards Bishop of Lyons, has immortalized his name by his indefatigable exertions to promote peace among true Christians, and to expose the errors of the heretics: as the natural consequence of such conduct, he also (it is believed) was martyred.

Until the close of the second century, no professing Christian had denied the divinity of Christ. Although Cerinthus had questioned the divine nature of Jesus, he allowed the emanation, which he supposed to have descended at the baptism, to be divine: but this fatal heresy was now adopted by Theodotus. His idea has since been partially revived by one Socinus, a heretic of the sixteenth century, from whom, allowing for variations, modern Socinians, and Unitarians, (whom God convert!) have imbibed their poisonous doctrine.

Theodotus called himself a Christian; but Victor, the pious and the amiable, then Bishop of Rome, excluded him from communion with his flock, lest they should be contaminated by him. And yet his opinions were nearer the truth than are those of some who now call themselves Christians. He acknowledged Jesus to have been far more than a common man, for he believed in

His miraculous conception, and taught that He was born of a virgin, by the Holy Ghost; but he denied His pre-existence, and His inherent divinity.

About the same time a schism had appeared between the Eastern and the Western Churches concerning the proper time for holding the feast of Easter; which is principally remarkable because the circumstances connected with it prove that at that time there was neither assumption of supremacy on the part of Rome, nor acknowledgment of such supremacy by others.

The Eastern Church was desirous of limiting this festival to one particular full moon, according to the Jewish passover, but the Western preferred one particular Sunday, as if in honour of the day of the resurrection, and both justified their view by reference to apostolical practice and tradition.

When the dispute ran high, and it was feared that the smouldering fire would burst out into a flame, Polycarp came to Rome from Smyrna, to interpose with Anicetus and the prelates of the Western Church. Though the controversy was not ended by this means, it was conducted with great temper, and without breach of Christian charity; and in token of holding the same Head, as members of the same communion, they partook together of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Moreover, Anicetus, to put the greater honour upon Polycarp, gave him leave, in his own church and assembly, to consecrate the Eucharist. It is plain that if submission to Rome had been believed to be a duty, Polycarp would have been dismissed with reproof, instead of being admitted to such unusual honour.

To the time of this bishop's death the practice of keeping saints' days has been traced ; a practice which, although not directed in Scripture, is not inconsistent with the spirit of it. Fraught with benefits to those who properly regard it, as affording a profitable example of Christian character to surviving brethren, and as tending to promote the glory of our Divine Master, it possesses a claim on our obedience, as being directed by the Anglican Church, which has authority for such a purpose. Nor is there any ground for alarm at such a rule, as if it were tinctured with Romanism, since we see that it existed before the peculiarities of Romanism had been invented, while our Reformers have struck out from the calendar all questionable names, and have retained only those of indisputable saints.

The third century, although conspicuous for the rise of some fatal heresies, and for instances of sad desertion, continued the work of propagation. It was now not only the unlettered who had embraced Christianity, but its professors were to be found



issued edicts for the protection of the Christians, and for the encouragement of their religion, the new opinions were propagated as the religion of the state with increased zeal, courage, and success.

Before we proceed to view the Church in this new position, it is proper to consider briefly the questions raised as to the use and authority of tradition, and the respect due to the writings of the ante-Nicene Fathers.

The Romanist manifestly errs in making the Word of God of none effect by his traditions, for he holds an unwritten law in many points opposed, and, where opposed, superior to the written law of God. In dread of such presumption, others have declared that they will not receive anything but what they read in the Scriptures: "*The Bible, and nothing but the Bible,*" is the popular cry; but thus, not to mention the claim of the Church as the pillar and ground of the Truth, and so, in some measure, the interpreter of the question, What is Truth? they deprive themselves of a powerful weapon which might be wielded to their own defence, and to the overthrow of Popery: moreover, they thus neglect to occupy a vantage ground, upon which their opponents seize with shouts of triumph.

It has been asked of Protestants, Do they, when rejecting the aid of tradition, heed the doctrine of

among the learned in the schools, among the valiant in the camp, and among the courtly of the palace. The ears of the emperors were assailed with defences of the new opinions; the Christians ceased to creep in darkness and in fear to the catacombs at Rome, where they held their religious meetings, and began openly to build houses of religious worship, and to characterize them by the sacred symbol of the Cross.

Many were conspicuous for self-denial, fortitude, and unbounded liberality to the poor; but it is more agreeable to our present purpose to notice one of the mysterious ways in which it pleased Almighty God to send the knowledge of his salvation to the Gentiles.

In the latter half of the third century the Goths had made an irruption into Asia Minor, and carried away with them, as prisoners, many Christians, of whom some were clergy. The Gospel was thus borne into countries which it had not hitherto reached; and the banner of the Cross was thus unfurled among those dark mountains where the Rhine and Danube take their rise.

Towards the close of this century, England and Gaul were less exposed to persecution, under the considerate government of Constantius, father of Constantine the Great. And when Constantine fulfilled the prophetic declaration that kings should be nursing fathers of the Gospel, and

issued edicts for the protection of the Christians, and for the encouragement of their religion, the new opinions were propagated as the religion of the state with increased zeal, courage, and success.

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¹ *Cor.* xi. 12 St. Paul, who said, "Keep the traditions as I delivered them;" ² *Thess.* ii. 15. "Hold the traditions ye have been taught;" and again, ² *Thess.* iii. 6. "Withdraw from such as walk disorderly, and not after the traditions received of us:" for from these passages it is inferred that, though some of these traditions might have been written directions, they were for the most part verbal instructions and explanations.

Without the aid of tradition we cannot show that the canon of Scripture has been faithfully preserved, that Ministers have been apostolically ordained, that the Anglican Church is right, and the Roman wrong, when they put a different interpretation on the same text of Scripture. Tradition powerfully confirms the arguments brought forward in vindication of the practice of infant baptism, and of the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week. When an inference from texts of Scripture is disputed, an acquaintance with the practice of the early Church settles the question; because the Christians of that age undoubtedly both knew and followed the Apostles' practice.

Nevertheless, although tradition is to be made available, the oral or unwritten law is only to be so far received as it is consistent with the written law, and confirms what is there either written or implied; and not for the introduction of any new doctrine.

This view was taken by the fathers themselves, and at a time when the succession of living teachers in the Church was separated only by one or two steps from the Apostles. Holy Scripture was the ultimate appeal of all who differed in their interpretations from each other.

Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, in answer to a *Ob.* 202. complaint that the books of Holy Scripture had been corrupted, appeals to tradition in confirmation of Scripture, and affirms that apostolical tradition, in all the churches, was in accordance with the written word. In witness of this he refers specially to the Church of Rome, which *See Riddle's Chr. Ant. p. 35.* had not then adopted any novelties, which was the earliest of the western churches, and which, together with Ephesus and Smyrna, retained an unbroken line of bishops.

Clement, of Alexandria, a presbyter, famous for *Ob.* 218. his learning and for his powers of rhetoric, declares *Chr. Antiq. p. 54.* Holy Scripture to be an unerring standard or sign by which we can always distinguish truth from error; for, says he, "we prove all doctrine by the test of Scripture, from which all false teachers depart."

Tertullian, who was a powerful advocate for the *Ob.* 220. Christian religion, though in his attachment to the Montanists, (or religious enthusiasts,) and in some other points, he was not orthodox, declares that in *Chr. Antiq. p. 71.* matters of faith the ultimate appeal must be made

to the Scriptures themselves. The Roman Catholics indeed lay claim to the support of his opinion, because he puts great emphasis upon the fact that the first churches received the truth from the mouths of the Apostles and of their immediate disciples; but, happily, one phrase clearly proves that his view was consistent with that already stated, for he adds, when speaking of the Christian truth, "as it has been professed from the beginning, in accordance with the *written* instructions of the Apostles." And, to make mention of one more, Cyprian, who thirteen years after his conversion

A.D. 258. was beheaded, in the eighth persecution under *Chr. Antiq.* Valerian, traces the errors which were prevailing *p. 95.* in his time to the neglect of keeping close to Scripture.

With regard to the authority of the ante-Nicene fathers, or of those ecclesiastical writers, *A.D. 325.* not Apostles, who lived before the Council of Nice, it will be sufficient to observe, that their testimony *as historians* is not invalidated by occasional incorrect views of truth, nor even by unsound expositions of Scripture. The peculiar education of some, and the enthusiastic feelings of others, led a few into partial error; but, considered as a whole, they form a valuable commentary on the doctrines of the Bible, and afford a powerful confirmation to its truth. They testify also to the early constitution of the Church, to its worship

and customs; and while they inform us of the various positions assumed by successive heretics, they assure us that those heresies were held only by a few individuals, and were protested against by the body of believers.

The mode in which the clergy of the early church were paid has become an interesting subject, in consequence of the cavils and misrepresentations of modern times.

A fund was raised from the voluntary contributions of all the believers, and was appropriated to three, or, perhaps, to four purposes, though not in equal divisions. One was set apart for the support of the clergy, another for the relief of the poor members of their own society, and a third for the provision of rooms or buildings for divine worship. That which is sometimes called a fourth, was a subdivision of the first; the offerings for the use of the bishops being distinguished from that which was designed for the inferior clergy.

Forgetting the difference of circumstances, some have extorted from this ancient practice a variety of subtleties, which might be easily exposed by attention to the following hints, and by the information which a little candid inquiry would soon elicit.

The contribution was of necessity *voluntary*, when there was no power either to enforce or to

equalise it ; and such power is vested in a State, not in a Church, which rules only the consciences of men.

So far as the uses of this practice are concerned, they have been, for the most part, supplied : as the first by the endowments of churches, the free gift of Christians in past times ; the second by rates for the poor, which if collected from some who are not members of the Church, are also given to some who are not churchmen ; and the third by a church rate, which is a property tax levied on householders for the benefit of all classes of society. Surely all citizens are interested in the maintenance of a religion which the State holds to be of divine authority ; all are blessed in the possession of the opportunity of public worship ; and all are benefited by its general effect upon society, whether they themselves join in it or not.

Some remnant, however, of the ancient practice still exists in our *offertory* ; and although the common usage limits the collection to one Sunday in the month, and then gathers contributions only from communicants, and afterwards distributes all the money so collected to the poor : it is plain that we have here the machinery by which inequalities in any districts might be rectified ; by means of which deficiency in incomes of the ministers, or in repairs of churches, might be

supplied; especially if all our congregations were reminded of the apostolic precept, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by ^{1 Cor. xvi. 2.} him in store, as God hath prospered him."

The tenth, or Dioclesian, persecution tended rather to advance than to check the growth of Christianity. It was far too deeply rooted in the minds of men, far too extensively promulgated, *Milman's History of Christianity*, vol. ii. 283. far too vigorously organized, not to endure this violent but unavailing shock. If its public worship was suspended, the believers met in secret, or cherished in the unassailable privacy of the heart, the inalienable right of conscience. If it suffered by numerical loss, the body was not weakened by the severance of its more feeble and worthless members. The inert resistance of the general mass wearied out the vexatious and harassing measures of the government. Their numbers secured them against general extermination; while the courageous confidence and unyielding heroism of those that suffered, stimulated the zeal and piety of their adherents, and enlisted in their favour the sympathies of many of the more intelligent and humane among their persecutors.

But the most signal and unexpected triumph of Christianity was over the authors of the persecution. Dioclesian, afflicted with a long and depressing malady, abdicated; and Galerius, his successor, *Gibbon*, ch. 14. was eaten of worms, like Herod Agrippa, that he *A.D.* 311.

Acts xii.23 died. Physicians were sought from all quarters; every oracle was consulted in vain; that of Apollo suggested a cure, which aggravated the virulence of the disease. Not merely the chamber,—the whole palace of this master of the East is described as infected by the intolerable odour which *See Jortin's* issued from his wound; while the agonies which *Essays,* he suffered might have satiated the worst vengeance of the most un-christian enemy.
vol. ii. 307.

LECTURE V.

The patronage of the Church by Constantine the Great, with some arguments in favour of the Union of Church and State.

THE commencement of the fourth century forms an important era in the history of the Christian Church. The darkness of the night of persecution passed away, and the sunshine of royal patronage brought hope and joy, new life and vigour to the professors of the apostolic truths; for, by the grace of God, in whose hand are the hearts of kings, and who disposes and turns them as it seems best to his godly wisdom, Constantine resolved to favour Christianity.

The parents of this prince were Constantius and Helena, of whom the former was partner-emperor of Rome. To his share Africa and the West had fallen, and from him the Christians experienced much consideration. Having visited Britain, he died at York. Helena avowedly *A.D. 306.* adopted the faith of Christianity, and in honour of her memory several churches have received her name.

The influence of a mother's instruction, and of a father's example, may fairly be supposed to have directed Constantine in the choice of a religion; but besides these, there were other causes which decided him in the adoption of it, causes which were partly political, and partly religious. His immediate predecessors, Dioclesian and the Maximins, were generally held in deserved odium on account of their barbarous and unjust severity towards the Christians; and it would have been wise policy in one who wished to conciliate public respect, to shew regard for the innocent, and protection for the persecuted. But the immediate cause of his publishing edicts in favour of the Christians was the success of his army, fighting under the standard of the cross against his rival Maxentius. Historians have related, that, shortly before the battle, the appearance of a cross had been recognized in the heavens by Constantine and his army; and there has been much discussion whether the whole story were a fiction, or whether the figure of a cross were actually seen in the sky, either as the effect of a miracle, or as an optical illusion. However the case may have been, the army of Constantine gained a complete victory. Maxentius was drowned in the river; and when the conqueror entered the city of Rome, he caused the emblem of the cross to be treated with parti-

cular respect. He did not, however, conform at once to all the discipline and rites of the Church ; and, although the question has been disputed, he does not appear to have received the sacrament of baptism until near his death. Nevertheless, his edicts and institutions all tended to the restoration of the Church : the effect of them was to recall exiles, to liberate Christian prisoners, to enfranchise slaves, to release those condemned in mines, and to restore the property which had been confiscated, or seized by the heathen, whether houses, lands, burying-places, or edifices belonging either to the Church, or to individuals. Beyond this, the edicts extended to restoring, building, and endowing churches, to legalizing gifts and bequests for pious uses, to removing restrictions, and to granting privileges and immunities to the clergy.

Thus was Christianity *established* ; for the monarch, having embraced its truths, felt it to be his duty to recommend them to his heathen subjects ; and looking upon the believers as a portion of his people entitled to protection, and deserving of encouragement, he legislated for them, according to the power vested in him as the head of the state. When, however, any question arose amongst themselves, concerning their doctrine or internal discipline, he directed that the bishops

and other clergy should meet to ascertain the opinion of the Universal Church.

Here, then, we find an early example of one who ruled the State acting also as temporal head of the Church ; a title which implies all the authority that a Prince is entitled to from his subjects, and yet does not interfere with the reverence due to the supreme Head of the Church, visible and invisible, Jesus Christ The Lord.

This notice of so early a specimen of an established religion naturally suggests a few general reflections upon the true character and value of an Establishment ; and these perhaps will be best expressed in considering and replying to the most popular objections that are urged against it.

Some first object to a Church Establishment *upon principle*. They argue that truth should be left free to make its own progress in the world, and that legal enactments only fetter and encumber it. Moreover, they quote a text of Scripture, which they think forbids the interference of temporal authority to advance spiritual doctrines, viz., " My kingdom is not of this world."

We, on the other hand, maintain the duty of the Legislature to provide for the religious instruction of the people ; we believe that the benefits of the State's protection more than counterbalance the evils consequent upon its interference ;

and we allege that Scripture is *for*, and not *against* us.

Others are loud in censuring the inactivity of an endowed clergy, and in advocating the advantages arising from the exercise of voluntary zeal. We deny the justice of such sweeping charge against the *clergy* of the land, and we recognize greater evils in the Voluntary system.

A third party denounce our plan as illiberal ;— we maintain that it is *theirs*, and not ours, which is inconsistent with true liberality.

Each of these positions deserves in turn a brief consideration.

Modern Dissenters argue, We cannot admit of a State religion, because our Saviour said, “ My kingdom is not of this world.” The Churchman answers, Your text is misapplied. Although, as all the other words of our blessed Lord, it is literally and perfectly true, it has no reference to the countenance of a particular religion by the State, or what you are pleased to call a State religion. The words quoted are part of a text, only the fragment of a sentence, and if we look to the entire phrase, and to the occasion of its being spoken, we find that it does not properly bear upon the subject before us.

The Lord Jesus manifestly intended to explain to the Roman governor that His kingdom was not of the kind or description contemplated by

the question. It was a dominion not over leagues of territory, but over the souls of men. It had to deal, not with armies and treasures, but with human hearts. It was, therefore, one which might be reared within the Roman empire, and might exist together with it, neither disregarding nor opposing its real interests; and thus, while justifying his own claim to spiritual rule, and denying the charge of rebellion against Cæsar, our Saviour's reply was a complete and satisfactory answer to the demand, "Art thou a king?"

In seeking the true doctrine of the Bible on this and on every other subject, we must look to the general tenour of Scripture, and not to one or two isolated passages; for there is a manifest evil in straining particular, and even partial texts, to support a theory with which the spirit of them does not perfectly agree. It might accordingly be asked, What sanction do the Scriptures give to the interference of a temporal prince to advance the kingdom of God amongst his subjects?

The New Testament writers, from their peculiar circumstances, are naturally silent on this point; but the Old Testament gives abundant and decisive testimony in favour of our view. First, the

Psalm ii.
10, 11, 12.

Psalmist says to kings, "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trem-

bling: kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way." Isaiah says, "Kings shall be *Is. xlix. 23.* thy nursing fathers and their queens thy nursing mothers;" and again, "The nation and kingdom *Is. lx. 12.* that will not serve thee shall perish." And once more, hear Jeremiah, "At what instant I shall *Jer. xviii. 9, 10.* speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, if it do evil in my sight, and obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I will benefit them."

Moreover, the history of the Jews illustrates this doctrine; and one especial value of the records of that history lies in this, viz., that it opens to us the springs of God's government with a people, and declares that "them that honour Him He will honour, and they who despise Him shall be lightly esteemed."

Nor is this all;—our reason confirms this view. As we are answerable in our individual character for our faith and practice, so are we answerable as a people; but in life, justice and punishment do not always overtake us; the wicked live at ease, and die in prosperity, for there is another world in which they shall receive the just reward of all their deeds: but to nations, as nations, there is no after-judgment, and consequently they must expect their reward or punishment in this.

In confirmation also of our opinion, that it is

not only the duty of the governed people to be religious, but of the governors to endeavour to make them so, we appeal to the testimony and example of holy men of old, who felt it to be an obligation to bring up their children and servants in the fear and admonition of the Lord; and to the language of the ancients, Gentile as well as Jewish, who, looking upon the people as a flock committed to the care and guidance of their rulers, were accustomed to speak of princes as the "*shepherds* of their people." Call to mind the conduct of Abraham and of Moses in this particular; the punishment of the Egyptians for the obstinacy of Pharaoh, and the suffering of the Israelites for the sin of David in numbering the people; the care with which Solomon provided for the public worship, and with which Jehoshaphat sent out priests and Levites to teach the law; the exertions of the good king Hezekiah, and of the pious Josiah; and that even of a heathen prince it is recorded, as a matter of thankfulness, that the Lord had put it into his heart to beautify the house of the Lord which was at Jerusalem.

Ezra vii.
27.

Looking at the question simply as a moral one, it seems the duty of the State to support a system which, being consistent with the truth, is best calculated to advance the cause of peace and order, of social happiness and comfort.

If it be granted that a king must adopt the

wisest means of promoting the temporal good of his people, and if it be true that eternal interests are of more importance than those which last only for a time ; if, moreover, the ruler should happen to believe that there has been made a revelation of God's will in this particular, and that a knowledge of this has a tendency to improve the condition of men, moral and social, temporal and eternal, it is plainly his duty to take care that his subjects be instructed in all the particulars of that will which he believes to have been mercifully revealed.

It will not be doubted that prevention is better than cure, nor, among Christians, that the simplest and surest method of preventing vice and misery is to send religious knowledge through the length and breadth of their land, and to bring up children in the principles of Christian truth.

But it has been urged that the interference of the State is an incubus on the exertions of the Church, and that the latter would be more zealous and effective if removed from this oppressive weight.

This is a captivating theory, but fails completely when applied to practice. It can express very pleasing sentiments of the power and vitality of truth, but entirely loses sight of the constitution of our nature.

It is not the practice of men to *seek* for their

real happiness. Sinners are not anxious to search after the ways and works of godliness. The sick man, indeed, sends for his physician, and they who are entangled in pecuniary difficulties run to their legal friend in order to be extricated; but it is not so with the man of sin: though the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint, he comes not to the physician of his soul: though bankrupt in his account with God, and having nothing to pay, he asks not for the counsel or the sympathy of the minister of the means of grace. On the other hand, he must be watched and sought for as a wandering sheep, and is with difficulty brought back to the true fold, and he who would recall him to his duty is avoided and repelled rather than welcomed and obeyed; so fallacious is the popular recommendation, that our ministers of religion should be paid as our medical and legal friends, only by those who may consult them. In the one case, nature suggests the proper remedy; in the other, the natural man rebels against it; and his unwillingness to accept of help is aggravated in proportion to his danger and necessity.

With all the aids and means, and incitements to religion, we make but little progress. Though churches are open in our immediate neighbourhood—though the minister is faithful and zealous in his invitations to repent—though the Word of God is constantly read in our ears—though pub-

lic and private prayer are inviting our attention, and though the holy sacraments are duly administered; how cold are still our hearts!—how languid our zeal—how ineffective our faith! But we may reasonably ask, What should we be without these means of grace? Alas! we have some sign of the sad consequences where these are wanting. Where there is a lack of churches, there is a moral wilderness. In the absence of ministerial supervision there is a growing indifference to all the means of grace. Even the holy sacrament of Baptism is sadly neglected by those who call themselves members of the Church; and, in consequence of the confusion which the ignorant and thoughtless make between the legal act of registration and the religious service in the Church, there is some danger of an unbaptized population growing up around us.

But it is said, Remove your State patronage, and see the effect of a Voluntary principle. The laity would become more zealous, and the clergy more active; churches would be more abundant, and the Gospel better preached, and the truth would be carried home to every poor man's door. —Where, however, Voluntaryism has been tried, it has not done this.

It is true that great exertions have been made by many who have advocated this opinion, but totally inefficient to meet the wants of the people.

Something in large towns has been effected, but even there the supply of the ordinances of religion has been partial and inadequate, and by no means in proportion to the increased and increasing population ; but in the villages, the more thinly peopled and the poorer districts, scattered so abundantly over the surface of this country, there is no hope or chance that the means of grace, or the blessings of religious instruction, will be supplied by such endeavours. In proof of this assertion, we adduce the signal failure of the experiment both in this land and in America, the records of which failures have been collected in a small and popular volume entitled "Essays on the Church."

It is rejoined that Voluntaryism has not hitherto been fairly tried, but that if Churchmen would unite with non-conformists, its good effects would presently be made apparent. It is also perhaps acknowledged that Churchmen would surpass Dissenters in liberality, and that the Church, by its unity, authority, and machinery, would do far more than Dissent has yet effected.

The Churchman's reasons for not acceding to this invitation will be presently subjoined ; but independently of Church principles, and merely viewed as a state question, it would be a sad day for England, and particularly for the poor in England, when such a separation should take

place. It may be true that the compact between Church and State is not properly preserved, inas-much as there may be, on the part of the State, too great a readiness to interfere, and undue backwardness to protect the true interests and the rightful property of the Church; but, as English-men, we deprecate the argument in favour of a separation which is hence derived. Our love for our country induces us rather to submit to such contingent impropriety, than to risk the consequences that would follow to the State upon losing the blessing promised to the Church, and the beneficial machinery of the parochial clergy.

Now, in every nook and corner of the land a clergyman is placed,—for the most part an intelligent and well-educated man, capable of giving a tone to the morals, tastes, and feelings of his neighbours: called upon by turns to warn, to advise, to reprove, and to console; at one while arbitrating differences, and making reconciliations; at another writing letters for an uneducated parent to an absent child; at another making the wills of dying men: always at hand to superintend the education of the poor, to minister to the spiritual necessities of the sick, and to tell of hope to the afflicted and despairing. Besides these works of charity, which characterize the lives of zealous ministers of Christ, there are also the more immediate duties of his office, from which none of the

See Cob-bett's Polit. Reg. 22 Feb. 1834.

clergy are exempt. They superintend the morals of all classes, and there is woe to them if they preach not the Gospel. They admit infants into covenant with Christ, they solemnize the interesting rite of marriage, they consecrate the bread and wine to the strengthening and refreshing of men's souls, and they decently commit the bodies of their departed brethren to their kindred dust.

The excellence of the machinery being thus established, its efficiency is next denied; and a charge is brought against the clergy, that they are dumb dogs, who would live of the Gospel though they are indifferent about preaching its truths and practising its requirements. But here the common law of charity requires that the whole class, society, or body, be not condemned for the indolence, or even for the sinfulness of some of its members. The fault is not that of the system, but of human nature: nor is it exhibited universally, but in a few individual cases.

Deeply do we lament when any transgress, more especially when the transgressor is one set on a hill to admonish and direct others. It is not only melancholy on account of the inconsistency with his holy professions, but because he becomes a mark for infidels to aim at with the shafts of ridicule and mockery. Not only we of the established Church must bewail when such sad instances occur, but all friends of true religion grieve

when these transgressions prove offences to weak brethren, and cause the Lord's enemies to blaspheme. The great body of the clergy are, however, differently esteemed. Happy are we to acknowledge the courtesy and kindness with which they are received by all classes of society. It would be unbecoming in one of their own body to assume that they are conspicuous for disinterestedness, zeal, piety, charity, or holiness of living, but it may be permitted to him to record what a noble orator has said, who is a sufficiently independent witness to render his testimony valid. It was remarked by Lord Brougham, that the clergy of the established Church are a body of men "whom to name is to praise."

After all, an answer is attempted on the plea that the union of Church and State under Constantine was immediately followed by the saddest corruptions in doctrine, and declensions in practice. But it is false reasoning to infer, that because one of the events followed the other, it was the consequence of it. We may recognise, in the attempt to amalgamate the old notions of Pagan philosophy with the new doctrines of Christianity, sufficient seeds of disunion and heresy, while the adoption of heathen views will help to account for the confessed failure in morality. In connection with this subject, it is interesting to repeat what Dr. Chalmers has observed upon the plan of *Sermon 15*.

Constantine, especially as we shall discover a striking similarity between his views upon the supposed effect of that experiment, and our already recorded opinion of the present system. "It extended inconceivably the powers and the opportunities of usefulness; it brought the Gospel of Jesus Christ into contact with myriads more of imperishable spirits; and, with as holy a fervour as ever gladdened the breast of the devoted missionary, when the means of an ampler service in the Redeemer's cause were put into his hands, might the Church in these days have raised to heaven her orisons of purest gratitude, that kings at length had become its nursing fathers, and opened up to it the plenteous harvest of all their population."

Hitherto we have not touched upon the expense, which the existence of a religion in connection with the State is supposed to cost the people. The fact is, it costs a nation nothing, or so trifling a sum as to be almost nothing. The Church of England is not supported by parliamentary grants, but principally by endowments of benevolent individuals in past ages, now paid in the shape of rents or of tithes of the landed property; and partially, almost nominally, by a personal charge or poll-tax of a groat a-year, known, if known at all, as an Easter offering towards the support of the clergy.

Besides these, the legislature enforces also payments for church-rates; but these are trifling in themselves, and scarcely worth an observation, when we consider the moral benefit thence arising to all men, in the generally improved condition of society. Every true philanthropist must regret the sad evidence of selfishness which those exhibit who will not pay because they do not participate.

That they do not themselves share in the direct privileges is no fault of the Church, nor of the State, but the result of their own will, while it is a mistake to imagine that they are not ultimately benefited. Their neighbours and their dependants, or employers, are instructed how to become better members of society, more friendly, more charitable, more temperate, more honest, and more faithful in the performance of their several appointed duties. Except by persons of extreme depravity, or confirmed hardness of heart, there is always to be recognised a halo of light and glory about the consecrated temple, shedding health and peace upon all within its range. Even the sound of the bell brings warning, reproof, and encouragement to the surrounding population; and, such is the efficacy of truth, that the words of its service are profitable for instruction, while its prayers interest the Almighty Ruler of the universe in the well-being of the whole nation, of governed as well as governors, of opponents as

well as supporters, of heretics as well as believers. Surely that which, by refusal of an insignificant sum, would cripple the Church from effecting such results, is a spurious, not a real liberality. It were a degradation of the doctrine of true liberty of conscience, and, in effect, it would be a licence to do wrong. Every man in such a case might plead a right to do whatsoever seemed good in his own eyes; the commandments of God would be without authority, and the third and fourth portions of the Decalogue would be even more shamefully slighted than at present. Surely there is a truer liberality in seeking to save that which was lost; in bringing the diseased, and those possessed of devils, to the Physician of their souls; in forcing the unwilling to consult Him; in compelling those who had stayed away to come back to the true fold; in bringing the knowledge of God to the poor man, and in educating him and his children for immortality.

*See Watkins on
Estab.
Relig.*

The ancient dissenters, Owen, Baxter, Howe, Robert Hall, raised no such fictitious scruples, but recognized many excellencies in our system. Doddridge and Matthew Henry expressly give God praise for the national establishment of our religion: while modern Dissenters are found to differ in their teaching, and even to support different views under different circumstances. The great body of the Wesleyans, for instance, are favourable to

our establishment; and Presbyterians, who are here opposed to us, find no fault with their brethren in Scotland, who avail themselves of legislative protection. These are facts well known, but it may be new to hear that it is the practice of the directors of the London Missionary Society to advise kings, in the Polynesian States, to banish their national idols, and to attend to the instruction of the missionaries. Their ministers, with all the fervour of their ready eloquence, urge upon these princes the propriety of publicly admitting Christianity as the religion of their dominions, and of granting, in the nineteenth century, the same attention, countenance, and patronage to Christian teachers which, in the fourth, Constantine afforded. We blame them not for adopting so natural and so wise a policy; we only take shame to ourselves that the Church has left her missionary work to be conducted by the ill-directed zeal of independent efforts, and we cite the practice of these missionaries in the hope that it may convince their brethren at home, when our reasoning fails, that the union of the Church with the State is not unchristian, nor of necessity injurious to the cause of Christianity.

*See Ellis's
Polynesian
Researches,
vol. ii. 528.*

The question of a union between Church and State having been forced upon us by the notice of the policy of Constantine, we have freely entered upon the subject, and endeavoured to overthrow

modern objections, by showing first, that such union is not contrary to Scripture, but actually enforced by many passages, which either prove the obligation of those in authority to provide for the religious instruction of those committed to their care ; or set before us the examples of the best of the Jewish kings engaged in such a cause : and, secondly, that such interference on the part of the State is neither unnecessary nor impolitic : not unnecessary, because the heart is so estranged from God, that of its own nature it will not seek after righteousness ; but a people for whom there is no watching and seeking, would stray farther into wickedness and infidelity : not impolitic, because the result of another experiment, leaving this seeking and teaching to the voluntary exertions of individual zeal, proves it to have failed ; because neither here nor in America, the voluntary system has been able to meet the continually growing demands of an increasing population. Moreover, it has been urged that the adoption of our system has sufficiently shown the correctness of its principle, and has only fallen short of complete success, from the necessary imperfection of human contrivances ; from the infirmities inseparable from human nature, and from the unfair opposition which, (contrary to the example of their forefathers,) some of the modern dissenters have thought fit to raise against it.

While, however, we thus maintain the propriety and the utility—not to say necessity and duty, of there being a national establishment for the encouragement and protection of the Christian faith, we feel it no less a duty to protest against another error of the present day, which loses sight of the holy origin and vital energy of true religion, in an anxiety to vindicate the usefulness and importance of an Established Church. Men are sometimes found to argue so earnestly in favour of a national Church, (with the view of maintaining peace and order in all the various relations of society,) as to degrade into a matter of second-rate importance the peculiar character of the opinions that are thus sanctioned. They who look upon religion only as a part of political machinery, for the better regulation of the morals of the people, would be unwilling to see the Church dissevered from the State; because, so long as they are united, they recognize the influence of moral, even of superstitious feeling,—adding their powerful sanction to the directions of the legislature; but if this be their only argument for the union of Church and State, it matters not whether Mahomet or Christ be the object of faith,—whether an Egyptian, a Jewish, or a Roman hierarchy worship at the altar. In every country of ancient times, and amid every variation of religious feeling, the usefulness of having

the sanction of the priesthood has been proved by princes and governors ; and, on many occasions, it has been the influence of the priests that has given power and stability to the government that happened to exist.

This, however, although a statesman's reason for the existence of such an union, will not satisfy a Churchman, nor a Christian statesman. We must be convinced, not only that the Established Church will advance the cause of order and peace and good will amongst men, but also the cause of the glory of God ; not only that the state is right in sanctioning religion, but also that the religion which the state sanctions, is the right one. It is not enough that the importance of religion be acknowledged, and the worship of a Supreme Being be provided for, but we must also take care that the worship and service so provided be agreeable to the revelations of His will, which that Supreme Being has graciously been pleased to make. It is not enough to do the will of God, but we must also, (as Matthew Henry has observed,) do it as he wills it to be done.

If we fall short of this argument in favour of an establishment, it would suit equally well with one creed as with another ; and they who now advocate Church and State would be bound, as far as their argument goes, to hold the same doc-

trine, if to morrow, in this country, the Anglican Church and the Reformation were repudiated, and Romanism established in the land. To this extent, however, the Church of England supporters of this argument mean not to go; and the subject is only noticed now to show the folly of debating a question upon low grounds, or upon an insecure tenure, when we can take our station on a hill, and on a rock that is impregnable.

The Christian churchman who views the Church, of which he is a member, as a religious assembly, sanctified in Christ Jesus, has two in-¹ *Cor. i. 2.* vincible reasons for maintaining the union of the Church with the State.

The first is that on which we have already dwelt at large,—the duty of the legislature to provide for the religious instruction of the people, and for the due performance of the worship of God in all things that are essential to the same. The second is, the advantages which the State derives from the performance of that duty, not simply the advantages in a more moral and intelligent people, in the possession of more dutiful and peaceable subjects, or in the systematic propagation of opinions which it is anxious to inculcate. These are topics which we are occasionally forced to introduce when opponents would condemn the existence of establishments as worse than worthless; but these are not our chief grounds

for wishing the continuance of *our* establishment, or for saying that the State is benefited by the union.

It is in the blessing of God that we recognize the advantage which a State derives from the avowed support of a pure form of Christianity. As believers, we attribute all success, and all prosperity, to the grace and favour of God; and although that favour is after all *of grace*, and not deserved, there is one rule, according to which it is dispensed, whether we be individuals or nations; and that rule is, faith in the gift and merits and intercession of the Son of God. The records of history confirm our view in this particular; and the Scriptural account of the Jews especially informs us that the national support of God's truth was always rewarded by a blessing, the national neglect of his worship never escaped a punishment. We are not so willing to account for failure or success upon this principle, when we read the pages of modern history, but proofs of its correctness might easily be traced in the revolutions of Europe, and in the varied fortunes of our own land. What a fearful scourge fell on atheistic France! What degradation awaited the children to the third and fourth generation of idolatrous Spain! What misfortunes environed that ill-fated family of our own monarchs, who, unhappily biassed by an erroneous education, leaned towards the errors of the Romanist!

To the national maintenance or national neglect of the service of God we accordingly look for national prosperity or national disgrace. Irreligious men cannot see the connection between things apparently so opposite, as the destruction of a Spanish fleet proudly invading our coasts, and the avowed support of the Protestant religion, and the religious instruction of the people; and it would be thought presumptuous if we associated dishonour to the British flag, or encroachments on the part of Foreign powers, with the admission of Papists into the councils of the nation, or with the avowed disregard of Christian principles as the characteristic ingredient of national education.

Nevertheless, attributing all national prosperity to the favour of God, and believing such favour to be dispensed in proportion to the national faith, we cannot but consider that the State support of the true religion is essential to the welfare of that State. If we doubted the truth of Christianity, or the importance of faithfulness, we could not speak so decidedly; but, with confidence in God and in his Word, we call it rather *history* than *prophecy* to say, So long as we maintain the Christian religion in all its purity and simplicity, we are a prosperous people; but whenever we corrupt or neglect it, we lose the favour of God, and consequently fail in our several undertakings.

LECTURE VI.

The state of the Church during the fourth and fifth centuries, with a detailed notice of the errors, abuses, heresies, and protests by which they were characterised. — The four general councils.

WE have already seen that Christianity, violently opposed by the priests and by the populace, for its repugnance to image-worship, was constantly involved in still more serious perils by the attempts of the half-converted Jews, and of philosophers, Egyptian, Greek, and Asiatic, to mingle it with their own mysticism. Against the traditions of the Jew, and the Platonic fables of the Sophist, the faithful followers of the Apostles continually and successfully made war; but as the energies of truth and reason, unless repeatedly strengthened by Divine grace, are feeble against prejudices, fortified by interest and habitual impurity, the Asiatic churches gradually gave way. Even at Rome and at Constantinople, which then became the seat of the empire, Christianity had but begun its triumph. Its advancement was ma-

terially retarded by unhappy divisions, and its purity and integrity were very seriously affected by the extravagant exercise of human fancy.

Constantine, the eldest son of Constantine the Great, reigned but a short time. His brother Constantius was no less willing than his father *A.D.* 337. had been to sanction the religion of the Christians by the aid of human laws, and to build and beautify their churches ; but having erred in matters of faith, and being unhappily tainted with the Arian heresy, he did in effect advance the cause of the heretics, and persecute the orthodox. During the whole of his reign the Church was agitated by a painful controversy with the fashionable but fatal heresy to which he was inclined ; and a blow was struck at the rights of the clergy by this prince, against which a council of a hundred bishops of Egypt, with Athanasius at their head, protested. Constantius was the first who deprived the clergy of their right to appoint a bishop, and having degraded Paul, the duly-elected bishop of Constantinople, he named Eusebius of Nicomedia Metropolitan.*

Julian, known as the Apostate, was the succes- *A.D.* 361.

* It is a questionable matter whether the spirit of this Egyptian Synod might not, with almost equal propriety, protest against the anomalous election of our English bishops ; wherein a Congé d'elire, seconded by the terrors of a Præmunire, relieves the dean and chapter of the vacant see from the difficulty of making a selection.

sor of Constantius, and openly endeavoured to restore Pagan idolatry. He is also accused of showing favour to the Arians and to other heretics, with a view of injuring Athanasius and the supporters of the true Church.

His early death revived the hopes of the Christians, and the short reign of Jovian recalled the banished bishops to their respective sees, and reinstated Christianity as the national religion.

The Church, being thus once more established, continued, under Valentinian and Gratian, to extend its influence until it saw the fires on the heathen altars totally extinguished by the power of the Emperor Theodosius, at the close of the fourth century. A ruin was thus effected so complete and so notorious, that it is pronounced by the adverse historian, Gibbon, to be perhaps the only example of the total extirpation of an ancient and popular superstition.

Upon the death of Theodosius, the empire was divided between his two sons; the Eastern portion was reserved for Arcadius, while the Western was given to Honorius.

The faithlessness of Rome, which, as a city, had been made the trustee of the true religion since the dispersion of the Jews, subjected her to Divine displeasure. Her mighty empire was dissolved, agreeably to the prophecy of Daniel, and was divided among the *ten* barbarian kings who

Gibbon,
ch. xxviii.

Dan. vii.
23, 24.

had invaded it. In the wild devastations of these illiterate warriors the professors of the Christian faith suffered no less than its opponents; but, contrary to the usual course of conquest, the fierce and victorious invaders, in place of introducing their own idolatries, soon acquiesced in the religion of the people they had conquered. They were, however, very ignorant of the true character of the doctrine they professed to hold, and when ignorance had led the way to fanaticism and superstition, these prepared a throne for the ambition of haughty and antichristian prelates.

At the close of the fifth century, the Church in Spain, which, with a part of Gaul, was now subject to the Goths, was tolerated. In Italy, under the Heruli, Goths, and Vandals, who, having supplanted the power of the Romans, had yielded to the influence of their religion, it was mildly treated. In Carthage it was just recovering from a dreadful scourge of Arian and barbaric persecution, conducted by the victorious Vandals. In Britain it retreated to Cornwall and the mountains of Wales, while the Southern parts of the island were subjugated by the Saxons; but it could be said to flourish alone in that part of Gaul, which, having been conquered by the Franks, was known by the name of France, where Clovis, the founder of the monarchy, was induced by his wife's per-

suasions publicly to embrace and countenance the orthodox faith.

Before speaking at length upon the abuses and heresies which characterized these centuries, a brief reference must be made to errors which did not amount to heresy, but proved the occasions of dissent, and, by consequence, of weakening the Church.

While we much lament that unworthy and inferior causes, as carnal feelings, ambition, favouritism, prejudices, and the like, destroyed the harmony and unity of the Church, we are confirmed in some of our views, by noticing that none of the early dissenters (the Novatians, the Meletians, or the Donatists) ventured, any more than the heretics, to undervalue the discipline of the Church, or to deny the authority of a bishop. They differed as to *whom* they would obey, but all agreed in submission to an episcopal form of government.

It cannot, however, be denied, that many of the prelates of those days presumed unwarrantably upon their wealth and dignity; and, looking principally to personal show, and power, and advancement, they presented a melancholy contrast to the humility and devotion of the primitive bishops. The strongest instance of the exercise of episcopal power was the refusal of Ambrose to admit Theodosius into the church

*See Palmer's Ecc.
Hist. p. 95.*

of Milan, (on account of his slaughter of the Thessalonians,) until he had performed public penance: and this implies, with respect to the Pontiff, that he was conscientious and strict, but does not prove him either haughty or hypocritical; and with respect to the emperor, rather affirms that he had the fear of God before his eyes, than that he was abject or superstitious.

St. John, bishop of Constantinople, forms a pleasing exception to the indifference which the prelates of that day generally exhibited to the gradually increasing pride and degenerating morals among the clergy. His eloquence obtained for him the name of Chrysostom, or golden mouth, and has been the theme of praise for many centuries. Selected from his writings, one prayer, at least, is incorporated into the beautiful Liturgy of the Church of England and Ireland; but he is more deserving of the gratitude of posterity, because he laboured with all diligence to restore the discipline of the Church, and to improve the zeal, the faith, and the conduct of both the pastors and their flocks. The contempt of ecclesiastical discipline in more modern times has perhaps proved no less pernicious to the interests of practical religion, than the occasional tyranny of proud individuals in the priesthood.

An examination of the corrupt practices that some introduced about this time will prove both

useful and interesting; for, by marking the time and the intention of their introduction in the fourth and later centuries, we strip them of the venerable garb of apostolical antiquity falsely assumed, and we shew that the errors of the Church of Rome, against which the Germans and the Anglican Church have had occasion to protest, are still more modern in their origin, inasmuch as they have lost the simplicity of character with which they were at first adopted, and have become matters of faith deeply affecting the practice, instead of mere matters of opinion and of indifference. Nor is this all. By observing what has been, we may be forewarned of what might be, and deriving a prudent warning of man's disposition to float onward in the stream of error, we may avoid such practices as, although innocent in themselves, experience declares have a tendency towards the corruption of the truth.

The respect which Constantine professed for the Cross, exemplified in his bearing it as a standard before his victorious army, and his abolition of crucifixion as a punishment, led imperceptibly into several abuses. The cross had already been used as a characteristic mark of places of Christian worship, and was now set up within the sacred building; but no more of superstition and abuse was then intended than in the very ancient practice of marking the fore-

head with this sign at the time of Baptism, at Confirmation, and at the Lord's Supper.

There can be little doubt that the earliest *Riddle's Chr. Ant.* Christians used this sign more abundantly than *p. 360.* we do now, and particularly in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; but at the Reformation, the reformed churches on the Continent abolished this practice on account of the superstitious abuse to which it had become liable, and nearly the same course was followed by the Church of England, although she retained the sign of the cross in baptism. Gradually, however, there appeared a veneration for the virtues of the cross; and, (though the practice was not common until after the ninth century,) a crucifix was occasionally, in the sixth, borne through the streets at funerals. Respect soon grew into reverence, and whether they meant to offer worship or not, and though we must acquit them of such design, it is clear that men of that generation broke the Second Commandment by bowing down before a graven image: and succeeding times have witnessed the ignorant and superstitious encouraged to pay to symbols and to idols that tribute and that homage which are due only to the Eternal God who reigns in heaven.

A similar remark will apply to the introduction of images and pictures into churches. During *Ibid.* the first three centuries no such ornaments had *p. 705, 706.*

been allowed, although it is likely that during that period some attempts were made to introduce them.

After the avowed patronage of Constantine, the piety of Christians, not unnaturally, desired to adorn their churches, and the gratitude of individuals prompted them to make votive offerings in commemoration of benefits received. The feeling, in itself laudable, was liable to abuse in practice; and the extent of its abuse can hardly be imagined by those who have never seen the pillars and little altars of the Romish churches literally garlanded by votive hearts, and heads, and legs, and arms, that are supposed to have been cured by the intercessions of the several saints,—or who have not witnessed the eager devotion of the uneducated peasant, climbing up to kiss the foot of an idol of the Saviour, or doing homage before the brazen figure of St. Peter.

Portions of Scripture, or other inscriptions, were frequently written upon the walls of the church; and this mode of adorning the sacred edifice is, perhaps, at once the most ancient and the most appropriate and instructive of any that have from time to time prevailed.

See Riddle. Eusebius, Jerome, and Paulinus of Nola, speak of gilding and mosaic work, as among the ornaments of churches in their day. And it appears that the pictures of saints, martyrs, and scripture

histories were gradually introduced about the latter end of the fourth century; but no images of God, nor representations of the Holy Trinity were tolerated in churches until after the second Nicene council, when image worship was publicly *A.D.* 787. sanctioned, 400 years after the time of which we have been speaking.

About this time, festivals were greatly multiplied in the Church; and the days that were appointed to be kept holy were often abused to purposes of revelry, licentiousness, and debauchery. This, however, is not a charge that can fairly be brought against the Church in general; and well has Augustine reasoned when some such accusation was made against him: "I know there are many who superstitiously worship graves and pictures. I know many that drink luxuriously and excessively over the dead; and when they make a feast for the deceased, bury themselves over those that lie buried in the graves, and after all place their gluttony and drunkenness to the account of religion. But I advise you to leave off railing at the Catholic Church for this; for, in speaking against the morals of such men, you only condemn those whom the Church herself condemns, and daily labours to correct as wicked children."

In the reduction of the number of festivals, the Reformed Church was guided, not only by her

characteristic spirit of wise moderation, but also by the practice of antiquity. Down to the fourth century there is mention only of the following days as set apart for religious observance: The Lord's Day, Good Friday, Easter, Whitsuntide, the commemoration of certain martyrs, not exactly defined,—and, last of all, Christmas. The laws of Constantine relate also to the religious observance of Friday in every week. The predominant idea seems to have been the same that it is at present; viz. that each *week* should remind us of the mercies of Redemption in the sacrifice and resurrection of a Saviour; while in the course of every *year* we should commemorate successively all the important eras of our Lord's wondrous history: hearing his forerunner proclaim the note of warning; tracing his steps from the cradle to the grave; watching at his sepulchre,—rejoicing at his resurrection,—witnessing his glorious ascension, and receiving with gratitude the coming of the Holy Ghost.

Besides these, the Church places before us the exemplary lives and faithful deaths of sixteen Apostles, to stimulate our zeal, and to confirm our hopes; for she includes Paul, and Barnabas, Mark, and Luke, with the undoubted twelve. She takes such notice of angels and of saints, as implies a belief in community of interest without addressing them in prayer; and she pays such respect to

the Virgin Mary as acknowledges her exalted privileges, and marks the divine nature of her Son, without paying her the honours of divinity, or recognizing any power of intercession.

It was probably about this time that the practice of invoking the name of the Virgin Mary, and of saints that were departed, began to find admirers, although it does not appear to have been sanctioned by any command or canon; while the invocation of angels was solemnly forbidden by a council held at Laodicea, in Phrygia. Herein *A.D.* 361. we find a condemnation of the practice of the Romanists, and a proof that this species of idolatry had already crept into the Church, though, certainly, there were then neither processions, masses, vows, nor oblations in reverence for the saints.

Upon the intercession of the departed, Milner *cent.* 4. has remarked,—“What at first were only the *ch.* 14. more unguarded effusions of friendship, became at last habits of self-righteous superstition; and one of the worst corruptions of religion was this way gradually introduced, and in the end too firmly established.”

The enormous evils of monasticism in its degenerate days prevent our forming a correct judgment of its early character. We are naturally indignant at the false representations of mendicant brothers, the abominations of cells nominally set apart for fasting, prayer, and meditation, and the

inconsistency of flagrant licentiousness with the voluntary vow of celibacy ; but we ought not therefore to draw the uncharitable inference that there can be no sincerity in the assumption of poverty, or no vital religion in voluntary solitude, in fastings, and austerities. Much less should we deny that the feeling which first prompted such severe and painful self-denials as the monks doubtless practised, originated in piety. It is certainly a mistake in holy men to imagine it a duty to retire from the world ; for the precepts of the Bible are especially suited to us in our character as social beings ; and we may deem it superstition when a man like Anthony the monk literally obeys our Saviour's precept, "sells that he has, and gives to the poor." But we are not justified in refusing credit for sincerity to those who, from a condition of opulence, reduce themselves to actual poverty, and consistently persevere through a long life in a continued course of faithfulness, abstinence, humility, and holiness. — Seeing, however, the effects of contrary systems, tried at different seasons, we cannot hesitate to admire the principles of our own, and, as we believe, of the primitive Church, which allows her clergy to mix in the world, yet not be of it ; to leaven the whole lump of society, and to season it as with salt, by the infusion of doctrine, precept, and example, while they are still to keep their dis-

Gibbon,
ch. 27.

Matt. xix.
21.

tinctive character as lights of the world, and as cities set upon a hill.

In these ages, prayers for the dead began to be introduced ; and upon this foundation was shortly afterwards erected the fanatical and unwarrantable doctrine of a Romish purgatory. The original practice, perhaps, arose out of partial affection, and too great veneration for the virtues of the dead, and probably was little more than to speak of the dead and of the living as members of the one Church of Christ : and therefore when devout men prayed for the eternal happiness of those that were alive, they expressed an anxious desire, as we do to this day, that “ We, with all those that are departed in the true faith, may have *Burial of the Dead.* our perfect consummation and bliss in His eternal glory.” They argued, that, although we know nothing distinctly of the condition of those that have departed this life in faith and fear, we do know that they are already in a state of comparative happiness, and yet that their happiness is not complete ; and therefore that there was nothing in Scripture inconsistent with the idea of praying for their *perfect* consummation and bliss. For a considerable time they entertained no thought of praying for any but such as were among the redeemed in Christ Jesus. We might indeed safely leave them in paradise, assured that the intercession of Jesus will mightily prevail,

without our farther supplications ; but viewed only in this sense, the opinion is, perhaps, harmless in itself, though dangerous in its tendency. When, however, men's hopes and fears and superstition once shadowed forth the fancy that the prayers of the living could mitigate the sufferings of those who were gone to their account, while still in an intermediate state, a profitable mine was opened for enriching the coffers of the Church by imposing on the credulity of survivors. The covetousness of the priesthood did not hesitate to avail itself of this suggestion. Posthumous prayers and masses promised to save alive the soul that had sinned ; and iniquity, and fear, and conscience, were only too happy to compound for release from spiritual suffering by the sacrifice of worldly wealth. It thus appears, that, however idle and unscriptural, the prayers for the dead are only dangerous as affecting society when they are connected with the doctrines of supererogation and of purgatory, and that of these, according to the Romanist sense, the early centuries had no notion. The serious evils, however, to which they thus innocently led, warn us of the danger of trifling with practices that are unwarranted by Scripture.

Among the heresies of the age, that of Arius stands conspicuous, both on account of its political importance, and because it refused to concede

that Jesus Christ was "of one substance with the Father." The originator of it evidently split on the *See Milner,* common rock of all heresies, viz. a desire of ex-^{cent. 4.}ch. 3. plaining by our reason the modes of things which we are required to believe on divine testimony alone.

Having failed in his endeavour to conciliate the opposing parties, and observing that the object in dispute was fundamental in religion, Constantine took the resolution of summoning the aid of the whole Christian Church. The bishops collected from all parts of the Christian world, and met at Nice, in Bithynia, in number about 318. Including the Presbyters the members present could not have been less than 600. Of these the Arian *Philostorgius.* historian declares that twenty-two bishops espoused the cause of Arius; but others make the *See Milner.* minority still smaller.

Arius was in consequence deposed, excommunicated, and forbidden to enter Alexandria; and a declaration of faith, in the main the same with that which is called to this day the Nicene Creed, was prepared and sanctioned.

By means of policy and intrigue, Arius, partially at least, regained favour in the court of Constantine. Athanasius, his resolute opponent, was deprived of his bishopric of Alexandria, and was banished. However, the sudden and awful death *See Milner.* of Arius (his bowels gushed out at the very mo- A.D. 336.

ment of apparent triumph against the Trinitarians) created a reaction, and the orthodox bishop was restored by Constantine, the eldest, but short-lived son of Constantine the Great.

It was, however, not alone Arianism, (which denied the Son to be of one substance with the Father,) but Sabellianism also, (which confused the Father with the Son,) that the Church was called on to withstand. Against each it continued uniformly to maintain a steady protest, although so many of the bishops and of the people were induced to subscribe the creeds of the Arians that it became a proverb, "All the world against Athanasius, and Athanasius against all the world." Even when another heresy arose, the Macedonian, (named from a bishop of Constantinople,) which denied the divinity of the Holy Ghost, Athanasius again raised his voice. "The Holy Ghost," says he, "is never called by the name of the Son, but is called the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. The Holy Trinity is but one Divine nature and one God, with which a creature cannot be joined. This is sufficient for the faithful. Human knowledge goes no farther: the cherubim veil the rest with their wings."

In connection with other errors of the time, we are bound to notice also the error of Pelagius, who lived in the beginning of the fifth century. It appears that he was by birth a Briton, and thence fre-

quently called Brito, though in his native country his name was Morgan. Misled by the pride of the human heart, he denied the absolute necessity of Divine grace to bring all men to the knowledge of God and to salvation. He conceived that the image of God in man was not so utterly defaced as to prevent him from good works; and he placed original sin in the following of Adam, not in the inheritance of his fallen nature. It is plain to us that thus he not only contradicted the testimony of our own hearts, which convict us of sin, and the assurances of Holy Scripture, which declare that we were conceived in sin, and that we are not sufficient of ourselves even to think anything as of ourselves; but also that he detracted from the glory of God, who alone converts the heart and saves the sinner, to whose honour alone the whole work of sanctification and redemption is to be ascribed.

Happily, however, the Pelagian controversy has ultimately tended to the publication of true rather than of erroneous views. The subtle and privy introduction of these grace-restricting doctrines led to the faithful assertion of Scriptural truth; and, while we must ever lament that through the instrumentality of Pelagius and his followers the pride of man rebelled against Divine revelation, we must rejoice that men were raised up to defend the Word of God, and that a closer examination

of the necessity and power of internal grace (although never before disputed) made the doctrine more familiar and more precious to members of the true Church.

In the second general council, that of Constantinople, assembled by command of Theodosius, a
A.D. 381. *Spanheim,* few words were added to the profession of faith
Eccl. Ann. that had been made at Nice, more than fifty years
p. 309.

before, especially those which maintain the divinity of the Holy Ghost in opposition to the Macedonian heresy, and the Nicene Creed assumed that form which, with very little alteration, is now used in our Communion Service. Because neither
See Ridley's Chr. Ant. p. 438. the bishop of Rome nor his legates nor representatives were present at the council, the Roman Catholics affect to undervalue the authority of this assembly.

Two general councils were held in the fifth century, viz. the third and the fourth; the former
A.D. 431. at Ephesus, when the younger Theodosius was emperor, against the Nestorian heresy, which denied the divinity of Jesus, at least until his baptism; and the council of Chalcedon, (a city of Bithynia, opposite Constantinople,) twenty years
A.D. 451. later, which was assembled by Marcian, the Eastern emperor, and which confirmed the views of the true faith that had been published at the three former councils.

On the latter of these two occasions, the bishop

of Constantinople was declared equal to the bishop of Rome, and up to this time no act of the Church recognized the idea of any supremacy on the part of the bishop of the Western capital, though one of the canons in the second council seems to give him priority of rank. But to this priority Protestants need make no objection: it is his claim to superiority and universal episcopacy that history repudiates. The term Pope, which, meaning *father*, is now exclusively applied to one, was then applied to other dignitaries, and the partial authority allowed to Rome was not in consequence of any supposed inheritance of St. Peter's chair, but simply from the political importance of that city, and from the early date at which its Church was founded.

It seems important to remark, that throughout these trials of persecution and corruption there was still made manifest on earth the Church of Christ, existing in her full integrity both of form and doctrine, bearing meekly her true mark, the Cross, yet protesting faithfully against growing heresies and errors. In the life and teaching of Athanasius we see some proof of this, and in the creed which bears that bishop's name, (not because it was directly composed by him, but because it contains the sum and substance of his teaching through a long and persecuted life,) there are evident proofs of the same spirit of faithfulness.

Sabellians, who confused the Son with the Father; Arians, who denied that they were of the same substance; Apollinarius, who refused to Jesus Christ a human soul; and Macedonius, who disputed the divinity of the Holy Ghost, are therein effectually confuted. An answer also is there given to the Nestorian and Eutychian heresies, which held opposite extremes, (the one dividing the person, the other confounding the two natures of Jesus Christ,) and which did not arise until some time after the death of Athanasius. And here we recognize the real reason for the length and particularity of this great confession of truth. It is a summary of orthodox doctrine in opposition to existing heresies. With respect to the condemnatory clauses which have given rise to so much discussion, we may remark briefly that the object of them is not to condemn others, but to protect the faith once delivered to the saints; not to limit the mercies of God towards those who, from no fault of their own, are ignorant of the Gospel's glorious truths, but to warn such as are influenced by an evil heart of unbelief,—to express that we believe them to be sufficiently revealed to all to whom the Gospel has been preached, and that the acceptance of them is one of the necessary conditions of salvation.

LECTURE VII.

The sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries, with an enquiry into the revenues of the Church, the rise of Mahometanism, and the gradual increase of power in the papacy.

THE sixth century presents little that is new to the student of Church history, except, towards the close of it, the exertions of Augustine and the accession of Gregory the First to the bishopric of Rome. There was the same corruption of the faith already noticed in the Arian heresy, a progressive increase of superstition tarnishing the pure spirit of religion, and a variety of wickedness defiling the profession of it. Monachism was partly the effect, and partly the cause of the morals of general society being thus degenerated; for, while a morbid dissatisfaction at existing practices drove some into the desert, and disappointed enthusiasts sought purity of faith and morals in the retirement of the closet; the sanction and example of religious minds were thus withdrawn from public life, and the student and the devotee

were assailed in their privacy by temptations no less injurious to the cause of virtue. It might have been expected that literature at least would have been benefited by this separation from the world; but history declares that it languished from its unnatural confinement within walls and cloisters: and the acquaintance with letters being peculiar to one class of men, the power which such knowledge gave was easily abused to advance the interests of their order. A very slight intimacy with the weakness of man's nature, and with the pride of his heart, is sufficient to remove all wonder that the spread of monachism encouraged the growth of superstition, and that, with the increase of their power, the clergy and the monks became more fond of dominion, and more covetous of wealth. The celebrated order of Be-

A.D. 529. nedictines covered the face of Europe. Though poverty and austerity were the original principles of this fraternity, their possessions soon increased into royal abundance: noble abbeys, fertile lands, full barns, and immense wealth, became the property of this order, by the vast gifts of the noble and the great.

Spanheim,
p. 373.

A.D. 590. Gregory the First, who was unquestionably a sincere friend to monachism, is very differently represented by different historians. A charitable construction of his character leads us to conclude that he endeavoured, both by his preaching and

his practice, to check the ignorance, the avarice, and the simony of the clergy; and his own example of beneficence, uprightness, and liberality shines with greater brilliancy from the foils with which it is contrasted. A true sense of the privileges and obligations of Christianity will always be characterized by such results, although many encroachments and oppressions have been practised by those who call themselves Churchmen, and much iniquity and licentiousness are still habitual with many who call themselves Christians.

The inordinate extent of authority and jurisdiction to which superstition had already advanced the Romish see, and which had abundantly supplied fuel to the pride and ambition of some of his predecessors, was to Gregory only the cause of much anxious and conscientious care. Although he received the prevalent idea of a superintendence vested in Rome over all the Churches, or at least, over all the Western Churches, as derived from St. Peter, it appears that this idea was not associated in his mind with any pleasing sensations of temporal authority, and that he made no pretensions to any thing like infallibility. Almost bowed down with the weight of spiritual responsibility, his humble nature is supposed to have been free from the promptings of ambition; and his primitive simplicity is said to have shrunk

from the assumptions of princely pomp. To others, indeed, his expressions of humility and modesty have seemed only the refinement of hypocrisy; but it is certain that he has left on record a signal, and, as it were, prophetic protest against the pride and vain-glory which were presently exhibited by his successors. An arrogant prelate of Constantinople had assumed to himself the title of Universal Bishop, and Gregory wrote with much vehemence against his unchristian spirit, and laid down some memorable rules upon humility, which stand in striking contrast to the self-same arrogance in his own immediate successor, Boniface the Third. In order more fully to condemn this assumption on the part of Constantinople, and somewhat vexed, perhaps, because this title had been refused when offered by a synod to the Bishops of Rome, Gregory styled himself "The servant of the servants of God." Whether in him this humility were real or affected, it is difficult to say; but there is surely no want of charity in censuring the continuance of its adoption among the titles of his successors, as a mark of absurd affectation.

Gregory the Great moreover wrote and preached against the growing practice of idolatry, and he was the author of the famous mission into Eng-
A.D. 597. land for the conversion of that country. Having heard that the inhabitants were Pagans, and un-

conscious that although the *Saxons* truly deserved this title, the *Britons* still retained, in their secluded villages, the true worship of Christ, and the pure form of His Church, he sent Augustine with forty monks to uplift the banner of the cross upon the English coast. Of their reception and success we shall hereafter have to speak, when, on account of its interest and its importance we shall devote a space entirely to the subject of the early history of the Anglican Church: but now we proceed with our review of events as they occurred upon the Continent, with such comments as the events successively give rise to.

The dire persecution of the Lombards, although a fruitful subject for the historian, and characterized by Milner as a constant scourge to Italy in the time of Gregory, has little claim on the attention of the Churchman. As the Lombards were Arians by profession, heresy again took root in Italy, and the orthodox felt all the horrors and miseries which a savage and victorious nation could inflict: but the spirit of persecution was rather that of uneducated conquerors than of unbelieving tyrants.

In reviewing the events of this period, we are interested by observing the origin of some practices which are still retained, and which invite an enquiry into the revenues of the Church.

In the beginning of this century, Alaric, king

Milner,
cent. 6.
ch. 2.

of the Visigoths reigned at Toulouse, and was sovereign of a kingdom on the confines of France and Spain; though afterwards the Visigoths, by the victorious arms of the Franks, were confined to the latter country. With his permission, the bishops of his kingdom met together, and agreed upon a number of canons, or rules, for the government of the Church; and among these we find the following:—"All clergymen who serve the Church faithfully, shall receive salaries proportionable to their services." This rule, so simple and general, was the ancient provision for the maintenance of pastors. But by another canon of this council, clergymen are allowed, provided they have the bishops' leave, to reserve to themselves the revenues of the Church, saving its rights, but without the power of giving away or alienating any part; and here is the origin of benefices. A few years later, a council held at Orleans ordered that if any person desired to have a parish church erected on his estate, he should first be obliged to endow it, and find an incumbent:—hence the origin of patronages.

See Riddle,
p. 303.

The payment of tithes, notwithstanding its evident allusion to a Jewish origin, does not appear to have been exacted by law until the fifth, or, perhaps, the sixth century. Although payments of that nature were made to the Church so early as the fourth century, they were not compulsory,

but voluntary ; and even in the sixth century, the laws were of an ecclesiastical, not of a political character. It is Charlemagne who appears first to have established the universal payment of tithes by a civil law. That emperor himself paid tithes from his private property, and from his Saxon possessions ; and his successors confirmed and completed the system of tithe-law, which was subsequently in the seventh or eighth century, introduced into England and Sweden.

With us it is of comparatively little moment when the payment of tithe was legalized. So long as it is a part of the law of the land, it evidently is entitled to the compliance of all good subjects ; and when we farther consider the equity of this method, we shall be more ready to condemn the resistance of its claims.

We are not called upon to argue whether tithes are the fairest, or the most politic mode of paying the clergy ; nor whether the alienation of this property from the Church to individuals was or was not justifiable ; the question simply is, whether we receive the property that we possess (by inheritance, by purchase, or by lease) subject to a tithe or free from it ?

According to the right of possession, we have a claim either to *the whole*, or *only to nine-tenths* of it : we inherited *all as our own*, or *all subject to an annual charge* : we purchased *all*, paying the

price for *all*,—or we purchased *nine-tenths*, paying the *price of nine-tenths*. If subject to a tithe for the parson or impropriator, we pay the landlord so much less; and if the property were made tithe free, the landlord would come forward and claim the difference.

Upon the duty of the Church to support its own teachers in things temporal, we shall not dispute; but it may be useful to collect into a short compass what are the directions of the New Testament upon this subject, and what the practice of antiquity.

Riddle,
p. 298, 299.

Our Lord himself affirmed, in general terms, *Matt. x. 10.* that “the workman is worthy of his meat;” and St. Paul says, probably with a reference to these words,—“Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospel should live of the *1 Cor. ix. 14.* gospel.” The Apostle appeals also in the preceding verses to proverbs and examples taken from common life, and from the Mosaic law. Nevertheless, although in these and in other passages he claims the right in those who minister at the altar to live of the altar, and enforces the obligation of Churches to provide for the maintenance of their ministers, he evidently did not exercise his right of calling upon them, but rather laboured with his own hands, that he might not be burdensome.

2 Cor. xi.
7, 8, 9.
Phil. iv. 16
—18.
Acts xviii. 3

When the Church had not, as a body, any pro-

party, but met all its expenses by collections and voluntary contributions, there could not have been any settled revenues or fixed stipend for the ministers of religion; but charity, and gratitude, and respect, doubtless provided a sufficient and continual supply for the necessaries of life.

We have already noticed, that besides the pay-page 95. ment of the ministers, some of the monies so collected were given to the poor, and some set apart for the repairs of the sacred buildings; and the proportion given to each was regulated by the Bishop, according to the extent of the funds committed to his care.

But after the laws of Constantine, entitling the A.D. 321. Clergy to the right of receiving donations and testamentary bequests, real property came into their possession; and the patrimony of the Church was augmented by the confiscation of the wealth of heathen temples, and of the ecclesiastical revenues of condemned heretics. The Church also was declared the heir of clergy who died intestate, of those who were deposed for neglect of duty, and of martyrs who left no near relatives behind them. To these some have added the payment of the tithes, but it is more probable that they were not a separate charge, but, as already mentioned, included in the foregoing list, under the head of donations, or testamentary bequests.

The questions, indeed, of tithe, endowments,

and patronage, though each separately opening a field for many arguments, are best understood by viewing them together. Agreeably to a decree already noticed, individuals might build and endow churches, and, having done so, might appoint Incumbents. Many availed themselves of this permission, and, having built a Church, endowed it for ever by a charge on the estate in the form of a tithe, and secured the right of presentation to their heirs and successors. This is a simple and satisfactory account of the origin of tithes, and of private or lay patronage. Any abuses that have grown out of it must be attributed to the covetousness of individuals, and to the weakness of human nature; the principle is not an unjust one, that they who have made a sacrifice to endow a church should have a voice in the nomination of a Minister, though, of course, the individual so appointed must be subject to the approval of the Bishop. By bearing this in mind, we shall perceive that it is not to the State but to individuals that the Church is indebted for her property; and, therefore, although, so long as the Church is united with the State, and the possession of those funds is protected by the laws, the Legislature is empowered, as a trustee, to enquire into the due appropriation of them, it has no shadow of a claim either to confiscate, or to alienate them into other purposes.

The rise of the Mahometan power in the East

was contemporary with the rise of the papacy in the West.

The first success of Mahomet was at Mecca, the metropolis of Arabia, his native place. The flight of the impostor from that city to escape the vengeance of a civil magistrate, who looked on him as a seditious person, occurred on the 16th July, 622; a date of some importance, as from this time his followers calculate their era, and call it the Hegira.

Taking advantage of his knowledge of Judaism and of Christianity, and adopting philosophical notions that had been blended with the latter, he fabricated the Koran, which he professed to have been sent to him from God, by the angel Gabriel. This work is reported by the learned to contain a mass of follies and contradictions, partially redeemed, if it were not for its wicked object, by some sublime truths and highly poetic passages. The moral doctrines of the Koran are of a very different character from those of our own pure Gospel; and if there were no other signs of falsehood in the one, and of truth in the other, the contrast that exists between them might convince us, that as Mahometanism by speaking the language of impurity, affiliates itself upon a sinful parent, so the innocency of Christianity proves that it must have come from God. It is from the evil one that proceed sensuality, uncleanness, and

James III.
17.

ambition ; but the wisdom that is from above is pure, peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. In like manner the means of early propagation stand in striking contrast to each other. With the one we have seen neither the arm of power nor the appeal to the sword ; with the other there were bribery to the passions of those who embraced it, and death to all who hesitated. The victories of Jesus Christ were over rebellious hearts of unbelief ; Mahomet desired only to conquer kingdoms of this world. He was eminently useful in destroying the idolatry into which his countrymen had fallen, but the success and the continuance of a false religion have been a stumbling-block to some. We know and can know nothing of the purposes of God but what he has been pleased to reveal to his creatures, so that our inability to assign a cause for this anomaly need not surprise us ; for, that we are not equal to fathom the mysteries of Omniscience is not more strange than that we are not able to work the works of Omnipotence. It is clear from its impurity, as well as from its opposition to Christianity, that the religion of Mahomet cannot claim a divine origin, while the fact of its propagation may be accounted for on merely human principles. And it may not be too presumptuous to suspect that it is a part of God's wisdom thus to collect by them-

selves one portion of his sheep, hereafter to be transferred, in his good appointed time, by one simultaneous movement, to his own true fold.

The rise of the Papal power, we have said, corresponded with the rise of Mahometanism in the East. Political circumstances coincided with ecclesiastical ambition to invest the Bishop of Rome with extraordinary influence: the favour of the French monarchs conferred upon him some temporal dominions; and intrigue united with superstition to subject all the princes of the Western world to the arbitration of his word. A claim to infallibility* was set up, and the ceremony of kissing his foot as a sign of vassalage was introduced.

Successful encroachments were made by Boniface III. and his successors. The celibacy of the clergy was enforced and the doctrine of purgatory was authorized. The Bishop of Rome laid claim to the exclusive appellation of Pope, and his influence was extended by the suppression of local bishops.

* In the year 680, a bishop of Rome (Honorius) was condemned of heresy by the sixth œcumenical council, for supporting the Monothelite doctrine; a clear sign that infallibility was neither allowed nor pretended to at that time by the Italian prelate: or, as Mr. Palmer says, p. 74, an irresistible proof that the bishops of Rome were not infallible in faith, and that the universal church has never acknowledged them to be so.

Rev. xvii.
17.

The fears of some and the interests of others induced them to yield to his authority, and so entirely by his word did kings rule and were princes set up, that to this period is ascribed the completion of the prophecy, "God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His will, and to agree, and to give their kingdom unto the beast until the word of God shall be fulfilled."

The boundaries of his power were waving lines, but, like those of ancient Rome, they were never known to recede. Silently and stealthily they encroached upon neighbouring territories. If for a time they were checked by some opposing barrier, they only waited till they had gathered more strength, and then, breaking in like a flood, spread wider desolation, and carried their influence into quarters hitherto unknown.

A.D. 800. The coronation of Charlemagne, at Rome, by Leo the Third, as Emperor of the West, tended to produce this result, by identifying his interests with those of the Popes; but other causes were not wanting to increase their power. The eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries helped to mature the system and to develop the principles which had characterized the seventh. The thirst for power was only aggravated by indulgence, and the success which attended upon subtlety tempted the ambitious to believe that artifice was allowable, and to call frauds pious. The conversions that

were made were for the most part to Popery rather than to Christianity, and the only evidences that the Church was not entirely deserted by God, in consequence of the corruptions of His doctrine; and that it was not left in these proverbially dark ages to follow vain imaginations, are to be found, first, in the unadulterated creeds, and pure worship of those branches of the Apostolic Church which survived, in England, in Germany, at the foot of the Alps, in Denmark, and in Russia; and secondly, in the faithful protests of individual bishops.

The cross was gradually changed into the crucifix; and the offering at the Lord's Supper of the elements *not yet* consecrated, with prayer to God for acceptance, was perverted into the elevation of the Host, with an act of adoration to the creature.

Image worship was acknowledged at the second *A.D.* 787. council of Nice, but as it had been opposed by all antiquity, so now again it was solemnly protested against by the British and other bishops, by a *A.D.* 794. council at Frankfort, and by another at Paris. *A.D.* 824. The German churches also, founded about this time, were free from that error; and one Paulinus, a bishop of Aquileia, rendered himself conspicuous by his opposition to the principal peculiarities of the Romanists known at that time, viz. to image-worship, transubstantiation, and the intercession of the saints.

The Bible was unhappily almost a sealed book. An extravagant attachment in the ninth century to the writings of the fathers withdrew the attention of the people from the word of God, and confined their reading, almost exclusively, to the works that zealous but not infallible men had left behind them. And consequently they who might justly have been retained as witnesses of the truth were unduly exalted into the office of judges and expounders of it. Moreover, the decline of literature had rendered an acquaintance with the dead languages particularly scarce, if we except the Greek Church and the few who had devoted themselves to seclusion and to study. So slight was general knowledge among laymen that the want of learned men was felt in the courts of princes, and the monks and abbots were called from their retirement to take a lead in the administration of secular affairs. Voltaire remarked, that the ninth century was the age of the Bishops, as the eleventh and twelfth were of the Popes.

*Middle
Ages, i.515.*

A.D. 831. It was in this dark age that the doctrine of transubstantiation was first countenanced, if not then first invented; though it was not distinguished by its modern name before the twelfth century. Happily however it was not suffered even then to pass without opposition. Alfric in England, Arnulph Bishop of Orleans, and Bertram a monk, raised their voices loudly against it.

Upon Bertram being asked, Whether the same body which was crucified was received in the mouth of the faithful in this Sacrament, he answered, "That the difference is as great as between the pledge, and the thing for which the pledge is delivered: as great as between the representation and the reality." Thus without contravening our idea that by faith we do verily and indeed receive the body and blood of Christ, Bertram distinctly protested against the Roman views as they are now proclaimed. While he retained all that was spiritual, he rejected that which was merely carnal.

But if any individual bishop of this period deserves to be commemorated by name, it is Claudius of Turin, who has been called, with some propriety, the first of Protestant reformers; although, if the views hitherto expressed have been correct, there never was an error warranted at Rome, which did not forthwith meet with the censure, and opposition, and formal protests of pious and learned men. The sentiments of this bishop have been left on record in his works, and one of them (a commentary on the Epistles to the Galatians) has been printed. He is sometimes spoken of as the father of the faithful Waldenses, in whose narrow passes the Church wandered for so many years, as the woman of the Revelation in the wilderness; but we shall presently have occasion to observe that this peculiar

people were indebted for their doctrine to no human teacher.

Notwithstanding much that was degenerate and heretical in the tenth century, emissaries of the Christian faith were constantly sent forth. The Greek Church gave Christianity to Russia, Poland received the truth, and Britain was instrumental in the conversion of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. The Danes were permitted to afflict the idolatrous Saxons in England, and the Norman dukes having embraced Christianity in consequence of their alliance with France, prepared the way for a fuller revelation of God's will, and for a firmer support of His Church in the country which they conquered.

Nevertheless, so fearful was the apparent condition of the Church of God at this season, that a *Baronius*. Roman annalist speaks of Christ as being asleep *Markiv.37.* in the ship, and of there being none to awaken *Psalmlxlv.* him, or to cry, "Awake!—why sleepest thou, 23. O Lord?" His eye, however, was watching over His people, and His will over-ruled the elements even in their wildest mood. In those very ages which are usually stigmatised as dark, the human mind was diligently and actively employed, though in such retirement that its light did not shine before men. The intellect was in a course of preparation for higher views and studies; the arts and sciences were revived among the monks and

clergy. England herself was indebted to her Norman conqueror for encouragement given to literature : although it must not be forgotten that for the security of his own crown this prince was willing to support the Pope's claim to supremacy. William, however, as already noticed, was not singular in receiving submissively a lesson from the Vatican ; for superstition enslaved the mind of all Christendom. There is too much reason to fear that we are not beyond the bounds of Christian charity when we speak of the wily monks as seeking only their own gain, and of the licentious Popes immediately preceding Gregory as seeking only their own gratification. Ambition was the ruling passion of the age ; and to obtain their ends men hesitated not to make use of intrigue or violence, whichever promised the most successful issue. The captains of predatory bands desired to possess kingdoms ; kings were anxious to extend their dominions ; and the Popes, besides endeavouring to advance their temporal sovereignty, aimed, and not without success, at exercising a spiritual rule over the minds of all.

The emperors of the West, or, more properly speaking, of Germany, (for the empire had been transferred thither from France in the tenth century,) endeavoured to resist such claims ; and so long as a veto rested with the emperor, he was able to dethrone those who opposed his interests.

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- A.D.* 1059. But to overcome this difficulty, the influence of Hildebrand, afterwards Pope Gregory VII., caused the election of the Pope to be vested in the cardinals. If we did not detect his object in effecting this change, and if we had not seen the consequences of it full of abuse in the political influence exerted at each successive election, we should make no objection to the principle itself. But when he set up a plea of supremacy and of infallibility, so that in him the Papacy was first revealed the
- ² *Thess.* ii. 3, 4. man of sin, the son of perdition; so that he exalted himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sat in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God; we seem to read the fulfilment of St. Paul's prediction, notwithstanding some signs of greatness and of goodness in this individual prelate.
- A.D.* 1073. Under Gregory the Seventh, Popery was at its zenith. The celibacy of the clergy and the doctrine of transubstantiation were both ratified at
- A.D.* 1095. the council of Placentia. The simple truth of the
- Prov.* ii. 22. Gospel was as a jewel in a swine's snout: while they who recognised its beauty, and treasured it as very precious; who preferred to sacrifice their lives rather than alloy the pure gold of God's coinage with the dross in common use, and passing current in its name; these were denounced as heretics, and were sentenced to exile or the grave.

Happily, though dead, they yet speak, and a voice is heard as from their tombs telling how specious and artful Romanism is; how skilfully she accommodates her chameleon colour to the atmosphere she breathes; how conveniently she adapts herself to the prevailing fancies and predominant weaknesses of man; how readily she has availed herself of fraud under the mask of piety, and how adroitly she has assumed political power under the pretence of exercising spiritual authority. The details of the past breathe a caution for the future, and exhort the Christian world to be faithful unto the end, not disregarding the oracles of God committed to their trust, nor departing from the faith once delivered to the saints, because some give heed to seducing spirits ¹ *Tim. iv. 1.* and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats.

Before we take our leave of the eleventh century, it is only due to the cause of Christianity to notice the effects which are ascribed by Gibbon to the preaching of its truths among the Danes. Notwithstanding some characteristic sneers at the proud and wealthy prelates, and at the compulsory conversions of conquered nations, he winds up one of his elegantly written chapters with these just remarks:—"Yet truth and candour *Gibbon,*
ch. lv.

A.I.

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A.I.

LECTURE VIII.

The twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, with some notice of the Waldenses and the Albigenses, of the great western schism, of Wiclif and the Lollards, and of the other symptoms of an approaching Reformation.

In the twelfth century the power of the papacy exerted all its energies upon the increase of its own wealth and power. With this view it enforced the necessity of masses for the dead,—it kept alive a veneration for the monks, it stimulated people to leave legacies for masses and for religious houses, it attempted to prove the validity of transubstantiation, it confirmed the propriety of compelling auricular confession, of worshipping relics, of adoring images, saints, and the Virgin Mary; and it added a new feature to its character, in order to magnify the priesthood, and increase the superstition of the people.

In the time of Paschal the second, in defiance A.D. 1106. of the practice of all antiquity, and, as we believe, of the institution of our Lord, did the Church of Rome, calling itself christian, and professing to

hold the Catholic faith, for the first time refuse the cup of the Lord's blessing to the laity.

Moreover, to advance its own purposes it prompted and encouraged the curious enterprise of the crusades ; a scheme that seems to have been begun in madness, to have been conducted with folly, and to have been ended with disgrace. Nevertheless, some excuse for sending armed men to guard the road from Jerusalem and to protect pilgrims in their visit to the Holy City may readily be offered. The Saracens and Turks interfered with these pious devotees, and, considering their own lust of dominion, they would deserve no great sympathy if they had sustained greater losses in Palestine than they endured ; but calmly viewing the subject, we must confess the expeditions of the crusaders both impolitic and unjust, and although schemes of defensive prudence might have been justifiable, and although some of their effects upon society were beneficial, we cannot do otherwise than censure the plan of offensive military enthusiasm, as it was then exhibited in action.

Rome, however, found her account in encouraging the plan ; she advanced the superstitious reverence for the cross by emblazoning it upon her banners, though how far she really promoted its honour is another question that might be answered by the reproof of our Lord to James and

John, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of." But she increased her own revenues by a convenient accommodation to the temper of the times. "Indulgences were now," says Milner, "diffused by the Popes through Europe, for the purpose of promoting what they called the Holy War. These had indeed been sold before by the inferior dignitaries of the church, who, for money, remitted the penalties imposed on transgressors. They had not, however, pretended to abolish the punishment which await the wicked in a future state. This impiety was reserved to the Pope himself, who dared to usurp the authority which belongs to God alone. The corruption having once taken place, remained and even increased from age to age, till the time of the Reformation. It is needless to say, how subversive of all piety and virtue this practice must have been. That the Romanists did really promote this impious traffic is but too evident from their own writers."

New orders of monks were instituted, and mendicant brothers, or begging friars, were united into companies and sent over the length and breadth of the land to make proselytes to Romanism.*

* How extensively they prevailed at one time in London is traceable in the names they have left behind them. In a continued line we may proceed from the Minorities, or residence of minor friars, or minoresses, or nuns, through

Literature continued to be studied; but the favourite theology was that of the schoolmen, whose commentaries were supported more by the testimony of the fathers than by a reference to Scripture. The laws were revised with fresh interest and fresh success in consequence of the discovery of the Pandects of the emperor Justinian, which took place in the middle of the *A.D. 1137.* twelfth century. Degrees of honour were conferred on those who successfully pursued their studies in this particular, and through the exertions of Peter Lombard similar marks of distinction were conferred on students in divinity. In England, Oxford, and, shortly afterwards, Cambridge, became celebrated as seats of learning; but as the schoolmen had succeeded in the room of the fathers, and as the Scriptures were neglected, a metaphysical subtlety pervaded their investigations, until in the thirteenth century the philosophy of our own manly minded Bacon directed their energies in a nobler exercise, and thus improved their intellectual faculties.

But a characteristic event of the twelfth and the two succeeding centuries remains to be noticed;

Crutchedfriars, by Whitefriars, and Blackfriars to the Temple, or ancient residence of the knights templar; while a little to our right we have Austin, or Augustin-friars, Charter-house, or the Carthusian residence, and St. John's, the rival military order, whose humbler dwelling is now to be recognised in a few relics at Clerkenwell.

viz., the separation of a large body of Christians from the Romish Church on account of the increase of papal tyranny, and of the prevalent corruption of doctrine, and manners. These were classed by the Popes under the general name of heretics, and as such were subjected to continued persecutions. The persecutors, moreover, as some justification for their conduct, invented, or professed to believe the most improbable calumnies respecting their opinions and their conduct. Every ignominious title was accumulated upon them. Dogs, and cut-purses, weavers, (because many of them were of that occupation,) poor men of Lyons, Arians, and Manichees, were their common appellations among their enemies; every term that could imply opprobrium, every opinion that modern views censured, and every calumny that ancient violence had invented, was applied to these *Protestants* against Romish abuses, yet the account given of their morals by an adverse historian, Thuanus, presents a picture with which such charges are by no means consistent. "Their clothing," he says, "is of the skins of sheep; they *See Milner.* have no linen; they inhabit seven villages; their houses are constructed of flint-stone, with a flat roof covered with mud, which being spoiled or loosened by rain, they smooth again with a roller. In these they live with their cattle, separated from them however by a fence; they have besides

two caves set apart for particular purposes, in one of which they conceal their cattle, in the other themselves, when hunted by their enemies. They live on milk and venison, being by constant practice excellent marksmen. Poor as they are, they are content, and live separate from the rest of mankind. One thing is astonishing, that persons externally so savage and rude, should have so much moral cultivation : they can all read and write. They understand French, so far as it is needful for the understanding of the Bible, and the singing of psalms ; you can scarcely find a boy amongst them who cannot give you an intelligible account of the faith which they profess ; in this, indeed, they resemble their brethren of the other valleys : they pay tribute with a good conscience, and the obligation of this duty is peculiarly noted in the confession of their faith. If by reason of the civil wars, they are prevented from doing this, they carefully set apart the sum, and at the first opportunity pay it to the king's tax-gatherers."

Milner has collected a variety of fragments from several authors, and comes to the conclusion that they were a plain, unassuming, harmless, and industrious race of Christians, condemning by their doctrine and manners the whole apparatus of the reigning idolatry and superstition, placing true religion in the faith and love of Christ, and

retaining a supreme regard for the divine word. A more simple minded or harmless people could scarcely be described. Their own records give such an account of their faith, their discipline, their patience under affliction, and their personal piety, as forcibly call to mind the primitive ages of Christianity. But the strongest testimony to the simplicity of their manners, to the integrity of their faith, and to their practical virtues, is borne also by their enemies, some of whose observations have been collected by Archbishop Usher. We have not yet given a name to this singular body of men. Probably their earliest title was in the seventh century, Waldenses, from the valleys which they inhabit on the eastern side of the Alps. The terms, Vaudois in French, Vallenses in Latin, Valdesi, or Vallesi in Italian, and Waldenses in English ecclesiastical history, signify nothing more or less than "men of the valleys;" but as these became distinguished for their faithfulness to the primitive creed, and for their freedom from the corruptions of the Church of Rome, they excited hostility among the supporters of the papacy, and were fiercely and malignantly attacked as partizans and heretics.

The other principal charges brought against them are those of novelty, heresy, and schism; and, to give some colour to the accusations, several Romish authors have confused these primi-

tive Christians with every variety of error against which they thought proper to contend.

Some supposed them to be Paulicians, or revivers of the errors of the Manichees, who had visited France and Italy from Armenia and Asia Minor; but others, with more reason, have contended, that they were the natives of those valleys, among whose wild glens the seeds of Apostolical Christianity were miraculously preserved, when cities and capitals, and the high places of the earth, were infected with the heresies of the Pontificate.

Sir James Mackintosh, observes Mr. Gilly in a note, is one of the very few historians who have done justice to this subject, and to the claims of the Waldenses. “With the first *dawn of history*,” says he, “we discover some simple Christians in the valleys of the Alps, where they still exist under the ancient name of Vaudois, who, by the light of the New Testament, saw the extraordinary contrast between the purity of primitive times, and the vices of the gorgeous and imperial hierarchy which surrounded them. They were not so much distinguished from others by opinions, as by the pursuit of a more innocent and severe life.”

It is necessary to distinguish between the Waldenses and the Albigenses, who, although essentially one in matters of faith, were distinct from each other, and actually present to our view two

separate bodies of men retaining the truth in its simplicity, while the rest of the Christian world was running after fables and vain traditions. They were situated on different sides of the Alpine mountains; the Waldenses living in the valleys of Piedmont and the regions east of the Alps, while the Albigenses, being natives of France, dwelt on the western side; and some modern writers, who have acknowledged the antiquity of the Waldenses, and the purity of their faith, have suspected the Albigenses of the Manichæan errors. Allix, however, who had thoroughly *Gully*, p.16. investigated the question, insists, in his two laborious enquiries into the history of these ancient churches, that each was the continuation of an original stem, the one having been planted in Narbonese Gaul, and the other in Piedmont, at no very distant date from the times of the Apostles.

The coincidence of their opposition to Rome probably caused them at the time to be looked upon as one and the same people, and the confusion in the minds of later generations has been increased by the curious circumstance, that one of the leading preachers among the Albigenses was named Waldo, and from the similarity of the doctrine, they supposed that they were *his* followers who were called Waldenses. Now, Peter Waldo, who was a zealous citizen of Lyons, and distinguished himself by the dedication of his fortune

and his energies to oppose the progress of the characteristic errors of the Romanists, did not make his first appearance until 1160, and the Albigenses, or recusants of Toulouse, were mentioned in the canons of a council held in 1119, more than forty years before he had been heard of. But the name, Waldenses, we have already noticed as a variation of the term Vallenses, applied between three and four hundred years before, and hence it becomes plain that Waldo was neither the father of the opinions of the latter, nor was he to the former the author of their separation from Rome. This is of the more importance, as the novel date of Waldo, and his irregular conduct in preaching, have furnished the Romanists with a false but plausible argument against the orthodoxy of the faithful mountaineers. Bernard, however, the famous Abbot of Clairville, who, in many things was earnest for the truth, who withstood the talented but dangerous Abelard, and who erred only in his blind attachment to the see of Rome, and consequent mistaken view of the true Church; this same Bernard who persecuted the *Cathari* under the idea they were schismatics, remarks, that they had no particular father of their heresy: an observation which may imply more than he is willing to allow, namely, that they were not heretics, but Christians, chil-

dren of the Apostles, and members of the Church of God.

By the term Cathari, which signifies "pure," we are to understand the inhabitants of the Alpine valleys, to whom this name was given in derision, (as the term Puritan was applied in later times,) on account of their objection to recent innovations and increasing ceremonies. The leading principles of these men were expressed in an ancient confession of their faith, with the date 1120, and are the same with those more fully put forth at the time of the Reformation, and embodied in the Articles of the Church of England and Ireland.

Their belief in the grand doctrine of the Trinity is proved by their holding the Apostles' and Saint Athanasius' Creeds, and their general agreement with the Anglican Church in opposition to the Romanists, is exhibited in their two sacraments, in their ordinary services, in their bishops, priests, and deacons, and in their special protests against invocation of saints, purgatory, celibacy of the clergy, masses for the dead, and papal supremacy. One Sancho Reiner, an opponent of these people, and a historian of the 13th century, bears the following very curious testimony in their favour: "Among all the sects," says he, "none is more pernicious than that of the poor of Lyons, for three reasons:—1. It is the most ancient; some aver their existence from the days of Sylvester,

A.D. 317. others from the very time of the Apostles;—
2. Because it is so universal; for there is hardly a country into which the sect has not crept;—
3. Because all others render themselves detestable by their blasphemies; but this has a greater appearance of godliness, they living a righteous life before men, believing right concerning God, confessing all the articles of the creed, only hating the Pope of Rome." What farther need of witness have we?—out of the mouth of an enemy, they are proved to be Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, and Protestant against human corruptions.

A.D. 1200. The most conspicuous in the painful details of separation from the Church of Rome, were some of the inhabitants of the town called Albi, who thence received the name of Albigenses; and though we have much reason to admire their faith, as having been tried in the fire, and come out pure, and to believe that their doctrine was apostolical and unadulterated, we cannot but confess them wrong in some matters of less momentous interest. They neglected to distinguish between a principle and the abuse of it, and, righteously indignant at existing error, they suffered their indignation to lead them into sad mistakes. Offended by the idle canonizations, and licentious festivals which were encouraged and multiplied under the name of religion, they refused to bear with them at all, and, demanding their entire extinction,

declared that the Sabbath was the only day to be kept holy. The English reformers have acted upon this question with more wisdom and propriety, with a juster view of the practice of antiquity, and with a better knowledge of the weakness of human nature.

Their next error was in rejecting the idea of a visible Church; for this we may offer some excuse in the spectacle which religion then afforded. The Romish Church claimed authority from St. Peter, appealed to her long line of consecrated bishops, and represented herself as the true bride of Christ. But viewing her conduct, her arts, and her meretricious ornaments, these pious men would have given her a very different title, and they described the Pope as Antichrist. They had not, however, sufficient knowledge of history to invalidate his claim to St. Peter's chair, and to trace the gradual growth of error; nor did they perceive that they might themselves be in their bishops, priests, and deacons, their faith and liturgy, a portion of that visible body with which Christ had promised to remain until the end of the world.

Again, to some it will appear that nothing can justify Waldo, as a layman, in preaching against the errors of the Church of Rome; although they may acknowledge that those errors were in themselves grievous, and ought to have been exposed

by a commissioned ministry. Doubtless Waldo himself considered the obligation as imperative, and lifting up his voice in confirmation of the truth, endeavoured to convert sinners from the error of their ways, under the influence of the text, "At the hand of every man's brother will I require his life." But with respect to taking upon himself any of the priest's more peculiar offices, as administering the sacraments, or granting such absolution as the Scripture warrants, we do not acknowledge that there was any necessity for his doing so, nor is there any proof that he pursued them. It is more probable, that having roused the priesthood, and leavened the whole mass of society by his translation of the Latin Scriptures into French, he contented himself with objecting to the errors of Rome, and left the spiritual rule to spiritual rulers.

This separation from Rome, however, will not warrant modern dissenters in separating from the acknowledged Church, unless they can shew that that Church has perverted the truth, and is altogether become abominable, and that they would so reform it,—retaining both the body and the spirit, the form and the faith,—as to bring back the characteristics of the purest ages. They would act more wisely and more charitably if they remembered that the evils of schism are often greater than those of a defective discipline; and

that, although Waldo may have been guilty of voluntary schism, the Vallenses and majority of the Albigenses retained their ancient belief and, protesting against idolatry, separated only when it was threatened to be forced upon them. It was the elevation of the Host, which in itself implied idolatry, that compelled the Vaudois to declare their opinions, and opened the door-way to their persecutions.

The sufferings of this interesting people were equally lengthened in duration, and violent in nature. Even Henry II. of England consented to a decree of council, at Oxford, that some of the people should be publicly scourged. Philip Augustus, of France—otherwise a prudent and sagacious prince—joined in the persecution; and a few years afterwards, their country was handed *A.D. 1224.* over by one who was appointed Constable of France to the dominion and the tender mercies of a people, who thenceforth became interested in its entire destruction.

In the faithfulness of these persecuted peasants we find much cause for rejoicing at the gift of the grace of God, and for admiring his wisdom in making the blood of his saints once more the seed of the Church; we recognise an example of steady adherence to the simple faith of the precious Gospel, and a proof of their superior wisdom in “holding the Head,” and retaining amidst

ages of darkness a peculiar regard for the authority of Holy Writ. But of all their persecutors, the most steady, cruel, and unrelenting, was Pope Innocent III. Not contented with the means of torture already in his power, he adapted the fatal engine of the most horrible inquisition, to the purpose of extirpating them. In the year 1198, he authorized certain monks to frame the process of that court, and to deliver the supposed heretics to the secular power. The various dates assigned to the establishment of the inquisition, arose from its various appearances: some writers contemplating it only in its earlier degrees, others in its developed system; a term which reached from 1198 to 1232. In the first year of Innocent's pontificate, commissioners were sent against the heretics, and these were what we have since called inquisitors. "In spite of much preaching, and some persecution, the Albigeois made a continual progress, till Innocent III. in 1198, despatched commissaries, *the seed of the inquisition*, with ample powers both to investigate and to chastise."

Hallam, i.
25.

A.D. 1229. Although the Bible had not previously been actually forbidden to the people, its use was almost practically lost; and at a council at Toulouse, the Old and New Testament, in the vulgar tongue, were refused to the laity, and only a psalter, and the like, allowed them. Men were

also, on that occasion, forbidden to translate the Scriptures.

In the thirteenth century, the Popes, encouraged by previous successes, claimed jurisdiction over the English bishops, and not without success. But the great assistance to papal dominion in this *A.D. 1234*. age was the superstitious feeling that prevailed with reference to the Crusades. Gregory professed "that service an effectual atonement for the miscarriages of a negligent life. The *Milner*. discipline of a regular penance would have discouraged many offenders so much that they would have had no heart to enter upon it; but the *holy war* was a compendious method of discharging them from guilt, and restoring them to divine favour. Even if they died on their march, the intention would be taken for the deed; and many *Collier's Eccl. Hist.* in this way might be crowned without fighting." *vol. i.*

The Church of Rome now began to reap the evil fruits of her law of celibacy. The corruption of her morals, and of her discipline, was confessed by all—by friends as well as foes. But it is not alone the licentiousness of popes and of cardinals that we have to regret; the self-righteous principles of Popery were more fully developed. An additional doctrine was added to existing corruptions. In consideration of monies, a commutation for penances was allowed; and hence the strict propriety of St. Paul's representation of the

man of sin, as showing himself that *he is God*. Hence the character of those who opposed the doctrine and power of popery in those times, received the most ample vindication; and hence the necessity of the Reformation itself may, in a great measure be appreciated. The whole discipline of the Church was now dissolved; and men who had means to purchase a licence to sin were emboldened to let loose the reins of vice, and follow at large their own desires and imaginations. The monstrous magnitude of these evils, however, helped to produce their correction; for, at the close of the thirteenth century, Rome was opposed by emperors of Germany; by the kings of France; by kings, nobility, and clergy in England; by the Waldenses and Albigenses; by Spain, by Arragon, and Sicily: moreover, the Greek Church refused to join in communion with her.

Of this portion of the Church of Christ it is important to remark, that it had never submitted to the supremacy of Rome, had never received transubstantiation, adoration of the host, nor that which arose out of it—refusal of the cup to the people. Moreover, it had entered several protests against the laws of purgatory and of celibacy. Nevertheless, during his short reign of power, Boniface VIII., who then occupied the papal chair, filled the whole Christian world with the

noise and turbulence of his ambition. He followed the steps of Hildebrand, and attempted to be equally despotic in civil and ecclesiastical matters. He it was who forbade the clergy to pay anything to princes without his permission, and claimed a right to dispose of all offices in the Church, both great and small: he also instituted a jubilee, which was to be renewed every hundred years, by which he granted plenary indulgences to all strangers who should visit the churches of St. Peter and St. Paul. His successors, finding that the jubilee augmented the revenue of the Roman Church, fixed its return to every fiftieth year: and since that time, jubilees have been established in other towns, in honour of their respective patron saints.

This seems the proper place to notice, that the *A.D.* 1369 famous Timour or Tamerlane, the Tartar, felt it ^{to} 1405. his duty as a Mahometan to persecute the Christian name,—and thus effectually he destroyed even the form of godliness in Asia, of which the power seemed to have long perished.

Upon the death of Gregory XI., arose the *A.D.* 1378. great Western schism, which deserves to have a more particular account than is comprised within its name and date. The cardinals, (with whom, as we have already noticed, rested the appointment of a Pope,) were at that time divided into two factions—the French and the Italian;

each resolved to elect into the vacant chair one of their own party; and the two bishops nominated to the office were so equally supported, that neither was able to dethrone the other. They, however, assumed each for himself, the titles now common to the popedom, as Holy Father, Infallible, and Supreme; and while they passed the most contradictory orders, each flung the most dreadful anathemas at his opponent. The Italian kept his seat at Rome; but the Frenchman removed his residence to Avignon. On the death of these, who were called Urban VI. and Clement VII., others, as their successors, continued the rivalry, and each alternately predominated for a time, but, on the whole, the Roman pontiff had the pre-eminence. Every bad passion was called into exercise by the professing high priests of Christianity. Occasionally, a third ambitious man put forth his pretensions, when there were already two calling themselves Head of the Church; and whilst, in a lighter matter, the absurdity of such proceedings might have occasioned only ridicule, the worldliness and impiety that were thus exhibited by men in so exalted a position, and with such sacred professions, gave rise to indignation, and naturally (though almost insensibly) diminished the reverence of mankind for the popedom itself; nor did this contest cease till it had lasted more than fifty years.

Before the close of this century, there were some signs that the Lord who had appeared to be asleep in the ship, was beginning to awake and to calm the storm in which his disciples were so grievously tossed and harassed. Edward III. of England, with other princes, opposed the tyranny of the popes; and although political reasons, doubtless, had their influence in rousing them to this exertion; we must also think that they were moved by the preaching of many eminent and learned men, who rejected transubstantiation, and the consequent doctrines of refusal of the cup to the laity, and the adoration of the host; purgatory, and its accompaniments of meritorious satisfaction by penance, with the sale of indulgences; the worship of images, saints, and relics; the celibacy of the clergy; the interference of the pope in other countries than his own; and the interdict upon the use of the Bible.

The vices of the friars, and the tyrannical domination of the clergy made many desirous of throwing off the chains which Rome had flung around them. But, like those of habit, they had been so gradually imposed, and so silently fastened, that it was long before they were perceived; and when they were heavy enough to be felt, they were found too strong to be broken.

Of all the energetic minds that rose superior to the prejudices of the times, and ventured to test

the pretensions of Popery by the Word of God, and, having detected its abuses and usurpations, to proclaim them to the world, none was more learned, energetic, or successful, than the immortal Englishman, John Wiclif.

His defence of the university of Oxford against the encroachments of the mendicant friars, and his unceasing attacks upon the insatiable ambition, tyranny, and avarice of the ruling ecclesiastics, rendered him obnoxious to Langham, Archbishop of Canterbury; and the sentence of that prelate, ejecting him from an honourable office, (warden-
A.D. 1370. ship of Canterbury Hall,) was confirmed by the Pope.

It is probable that a resentful sense of the ill-treatment upon this occasion warmed his enthusiasm against the Bishop of Rome and his partizans, the monks; and there is no denying that he was influenced by passion to use stronger phrases than Christian charity would justify. His character has been differently sketched by different historians. The bigoted papist loses patience in describing his principles and conduct. The philosophic unbeliever accounts for his exertions and success by attributing to him enthusiasm, hypocrisy, pride of human heart, and inordinate love of popularity. With his manly freedom in enquiring after truth, and his boldness in defending it, even at great personal risk, others are so

much charmed that they become almost blind to the faults, errors, and defects of their favourite ecclesiastic. While, however, we admire these virtues exerted in so holy a cause, and gratefully praise God for having raised up a champion best suited for the peculiar crisis, and in the most perilous times; while we rejoice in believing that this celebrated reformer did belong to the true Church of Christ, we sincerely lament that so honoured a servant of God should seem, on any occasion, in supporting the righteous cause of religion, to have relied on political dexterity, or on the favour of a court: we regret that, like Cranmer, in later days, he should have given the Lord's enemies occasion to blaspheme, by affording them a handle for the suspicion, that from the fear of death he altered his creed, or in the form of his expressions used artifice and duplicity. But in speaking of this truly great man, we must not forget the work which sheds the brightest lustre on his name, and to which the whole Church was eminently indebted. He completed (from many Latin versions compared together) a very nervous English translation of the Bible,—and not only published it, but pleaded in a very spirited and sensible manner, the *right* of the people to read the Scriptures.

In connection with the name of Wiclif, some remarks upon the Lollards will be naturally ex-

pected. They appear originally to have been a section of the Waldenses; and there is some suspicion that they to whom the name was first applied, were a disgrace to the profession of Christianity, both in their principles and in their practice. The word Lollard is said to signify darnel; and it is doubtful whether it was derived from one Walter Raynard Lollard, a Dutchman, burnt at Cologne for holding heretical opinions, or was applied to these new preachers to express an opinion that they were *weeds* on the surface of the earth.* Certainly, in a short time it became a term of general reproach, and was readily transferred to the followers of Wiclif in England, who were supposed to hold similar opinions. It is no matter of importance that we are not urgent in defending the faith or practice of the early Lollards. Wiclif's Lollards need no defence from us. The fact that an enemy gave them this name does not convict them of any errors or vices of which those so called on the Continent may have been guilty; while the well-known morality and purer faith of Wiclif and his followers lead us to hope that the earlier Lollards were not described with greater justice, than were the opinions of Wiclif, when in his bull addressed to Oxford, the Pope spoke of them as *tares*.

A.D. 1376. The same historian whom we have already

* Others derive it from *lollen*, to sing.

quoted as bearing honourable testimony to the Waldenses, has also happily left on record his opinion of the followers of Wiclif,—an opinion of the more importance, because in his simplicity he does not note these things as being worthy of approbation, but as the distinguishing works of a heretical people. “The disciples of Wiclif,” says Sancho Reiner, “are men of a serious, modest deportment, avoiding all ostentation in dress, mixing little with the world, and complaining of the debauchery of mankind. They maintain themselves wholly by their own labour, and utterly despise wealth, being fully content with bare necessaries. They follow no traffic, because it is attended with so much lying, swearing, and cheating. They are chaste and temperate,—are never seen in taverns, or amused by the trifling gaieties of life. You find them always employed, either learning or teaching; they are concise and devout in their prayers, blaming an unanimated prolixity; they never swear, speak little, and in their public preaching lay the chief stress on charity; they never mind canonical hours, because they say that a paternoster or two, repeated with devotion, is better than tedious hours spent without devotion; they explain the Scriptures in a different way from the holy doctors and Church of Rome; they speak little, and humbly, and are well behaved in appearance.”

In England, however, principally through the influence of the clergy, these harmless people were persecuted from the time of Richard II. to that of Henry VIII. Henry IV., although the son of Wiclif's patron, the Duke of Lancaster, was induced by his ambitious and interested views to take an active part against them. In the wars that followed, between the lines of York and Lancaster, they had but little respite, and when those feuds ceased in the succession of Henry VII., it seemed as if the partial interruption had sharpened the appetite for persecution. With the grievously mistaken notions that separation from the Pope was the most horrible heresy, and that the best mode of extinguishing heresy was to burn all heretics, the flame and the sword were let loose against them; neither sex nor age was spared; the informer carried his victim to the priest, the priest handed him over to the jailor, and the jailor felt that his office was not performed until he carried him to the executioner; and such was the infatuation and judicial blindness of men in those days, that here, as in the former case of persecutions, they that killed the disciples of the Lord thought that they were doing God service. How little did they know of what spirit are the real upholders of Christ's doctrine!

The fifteenth century was truly memorable in the history of the Church of Christ, and was evidently

making rapid progress towards a most important crisis. The virulent persecutions that had driven the Waldenses, the Albigenses, and the Lollards, from their once quiet homes into every city in Europe, with them had also undesignedly sent their doctrines.

The Council of Constance is of interest as tending to throw light on the state of religion at that time, and particularly as serving to illustrate the characters of John Huss and of Jerome of Prague, who had endeavoured to reform the Church in Bohemia. Another effect also was then produced; by the decree to dethrone the *three* existing Popes, Gregory XII., Benedict XIII., and John XXIII., a deep blow was inflicted on the Papal hierarchy, for the superiority of Councils above Popes was thus acknowledged; and although there has appeared to some a sad want of true humility, practical piety, and knowledge of the Scriptures in the parties who assembled on this occasion, they prepared the way for the true reformers of the next century, by recognizing the propriety of appeal to Scripture.

The fidelity of Huss was sorely tested by repeated trials and cross-examinations upon the doctrines he had preached, by imprisonments, and threats, and solicitations. Respect for his character made even his opponents loth to witness his death, and his execution was thus repeatedly

deferred. After he had suffered, a formal objection was addressed to this Council by all the nobility of Bohemia, protesting against the injustice of their decree, maintaining the orthodoxy and piety of the martyr, and censuring the imprisonment of another eminent ecclesiastic. Our account of this brother-reformer is not quite so satisfactory; the exertions of those who visited Jerome of Prague in prison prevailed upon him to retract, and thus was disgraced before the world a man of most excellent learning and copious eloquence, of signal talents, fortitude, and morals. Christian charity would teach us not to be harsh in passing judgment on his error, nor unmindful of the force of his temptation, and of the weakness of human nature. We who fall every day in not doing what we ought to do, and in doing what we ought not to do, may employ our time better than in censuring the single weakness of another and a better man. Moreover, the damp walls of a prison, the dread summons to an assemblage of learned, acute, and bigoted judges, the failing of health, the persecutions of enemies, the arguments of subtlety, and the solicitations of former friends, (all of which appear to have united in the present case,) have a natural tendency to shake the resolutions, and it is only a constant supply of divine grace that would enable any one of us, under similar circum-

stances, to remain faithful unto the end. But, again, in such a case as Jerome's, we have less right to be severe, because the mercy of God seems to have owned him once more after his desertion, and he was supported in a very striking manner to bear his latest testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus, and to suffer with exemplary patience and astonishing fortitude, the prolonged agonies of *A. D.* 1416. martyrdom by fire.

Before we leave our notice of the Bohemian Reformation, we must not omit to mention some of its defects. Though zealous against Popish abominations, it entered not with energy and distinctness into the genuine essential doctrines of the Gospel. Instead of laying the axe to the root of the tree, and preaching the pure Word of God, and patiently suffering persecution, and standing still to see the salvation of God, the reformers took the cause into their own hands, and attempted to avenge themselves upon their enemies by the power of the sword, and by the arm of flesh. The Hussites knew not what spirit they were of, and when the ill success of their issue is compared with the decisive victories over Popery afterwards attained, we cannot avoid seeing that their zeal failed, because it was without discretion, and that, in matters of religion especially, discretion must be of a religious character, fraught with knowledge, humility, faith, meekness, and

Zech. iv. 10. charity. Nevertheless, we “despise not the day of small things:” these were all pioneers breaking the way for the grand assault that was afterwards to be made by the next generation—the vanguard who shewed their children the road to victory, though they won it not for themselves; and we cannot do less than respect their memories, when we see how far superior they rose to the prejudices of their education. Though we may regret their deficiency of Christian instruction, we must admire the self-devotion and disinterested love of truth which urged them to attack the citadel of the enemy in almost forlorn hope, and having made a breach in the wall, to leave their bodies there as a bridge for the whole army to pass over.

Most of the events of this century had a particular subserviency to the great work of the Reformation, and were preparing the way for it, so that it is not to be regarded as a great and sudden event which took the nations by surprize. It was merely, says the author of a very delightful summary of the Reformation in England, the crisis to which things had been tending for some centuries; and if the fire did at last run over the country, with wonderful rapidity, it was because the trees were all dry. It is a mistake to suppose that whilst the Roman Catholic religion prevailed all was unity. True it is, that the elements of discontent were as yet working for the most part

under ground ; but they were not on that account the less likely to make themselves eventually felt. The strong man, armed, was keeping the house, and therefore his goods were at peace ; but he was in jeopardy long before he was spoiled. Luther was the match that produced the explosion ; but the train had been laid by the events of generations before him.

Besides matters immediately connected with Rome, and with religion, a variety of other circumstances converged to the same centre ; everything indicated the coming of a mighty change. The mind of man was released from the dark prison-house of superstition in which it had been bound for several centuries ; his intelligence was awakened, his curiosity excited, and his research rewarded. Not to speak of the invention of gunpowder, which, by changing the state of war, changed the state of nations ; the *A.D.* 1400. mariner's compass had encouraged enterprize, and *A.D.* 1302. was now throwing open every quarter of the world to European intercourse. The passage to India *A.D.* 1486. round the Cape of Good Hope, and the discovery of a new world in the continent of America, en-*A.D.* 1492. larged the views of men, and offered incalculable means of increasing their enjoyments, their uses, and their knowledge. Moreover, in the midst of these events, Constantinople fell, and the liter-*A.D.* 1453. ature of the Greek empire was suddenly spread

anew throughout the West. The learned Greeks, who emigrated to avoid the persecution of the Turks, revived the study of letters in Europe, and paved the way for that light of classical erudition, which was one of the most powerful of all the *subordinate* means employed to demolish idolatry and superstition.

Erasmus,
born 1487.
a Kempis,
ob. A.D.
1471.

Many talented and pious individuals assisted the development of human intellect. The family of the Medici, in Italy, signalized themselves by the patronage of human science; and the names of Erasmus, and Thomas à Kempis, deserve our gratitude; for the one contributed by his industry and talents to annihilate the monastic superstitions, and to render critical studies more easy and more instructive; while the other, by his Christian devotion and experience, helped to raise the standard of spiritual religion.

But the great work which completed the enfranchisement of the human mind, and presented it with kingdoms wider than the world,—which yielded treasures more valuable than the mines of South America, or the traffic of the East,—which made learning available, and by the diffusion of A.D. 1441. the Scriptures brought life and immortality to light,—was the invention of the noble art of printing. Singularly permitted at this critical period, and instrumentally effective to the propagation of the Word of God, and the glory of his

religion, this invention,—the most striking sign of the times,—indicates that the great end to which it was applied, was providentially designed and furthered.

The Spirit of God moved over the chaos of ignorance, and called light out of darkness, and order from confusion; and thus He worked as it were a second miracle of tongues, by human means, that the Gospel might be preached to every creature under heaven.

LECTURE IX.

Outline of the German Reformation.

A SURPRISING concurrence of events, viz: the corruption of the doctrines and of morals in the Romish priesthood, the partial translation of the Bible into modern languages, and the energy of truth exhibiting itself in the constancy, fidelity, and perseverance of individual believers, demanded a reform in the practice and the tenets of the Western Church. Moreover, the improvements in the arts and sciences gave a fresh impetus to the human mind, the recent discovery of America aroused and rewarded ingenuity and enterprise, and the invention of printing gave circulation to the wisdom of the wise, to the learning of the learned, and to the doubts of the doubters. By these means men were prepared for a clearer view of the truth; we might almost say for a fresh revelation; the fulness of time was come, and though we were ignorant of the historical facts, we should decide, from a general view of Europe at this period, that things were ripe for

a change. This, however, it must be allowed, is not a universal feeling: some have been struck with the contrast between the aspect of the Church of Rome under Leo X., when it appeared in all its strength and reputation, and that which it exhibited when its power and glory through half of Europe were crumbling into dust, after an obscure, though highly favoured, monk had spoken a few words, and published a few tracts; and hence they have concluded that the change was a sudden one. In this suspicion they have been confirmed by the idea that the interference of the divine hand is thus made more apparent. With these we are forward to express our belief that the work was a divine one; but it seems more consistent with truth, and not less so with the notion of a merciful superintendence, to believe that second causes were permitted to produce this grand result, and that there was a very peculiar and very wise combination of these second causes at the very moment of the crisis.

In two or three stages in the history of the Church, affairs in particular spots, as in England, or in Switzerland, seemed ripe for a Reformation, and for abjuring the interference of the Pope; but the wisdom and goodness of God held back the hands of his people until their movement could effect an extensively beneficial, moral, and religious change.

For the first step towards this revolution we look to Germany, and of its early history and progress we might in vain seek for a more graphic or correct description than that which was given in a mask, or pantomime, said to have been acted before the emperor Charles V., while attending at a diet at Augsburg.

A.D. 1530. A man clothed in the usual habit of a doctor of divinity, and having the name 'Capnio' written on his back, first came upon the stage: he brought with him a bundle of sticks, some crooked and some straight, and having thrown them down in the middle of the room, he went away; he was followed by a second habited as a secular priest, and masked, with the name 'Erasmus,' who took great pains in endeavouring to put the sticks in order, and to make the crooked ones straight; but finding that he laboured in vain, he shook his head sorrowfully, and left the scene. Then came Dr. Martin Luther, in the dress of a monk. He set fire to the crooked sticks, and when the flames began to rise, withdrew. Hereupon the emperor appeared, who seeing the crooked sticks on fire, ran into the midst with his sword in his hand, with which he endeavoured to extinguish the flames, but by this means he only increased the conflagration. At last came the Pope; he wrung his hands with terror and vexation, and looked about despairingly for some means of quenching

the disastrous fire: two vessels stood at a little distance, one filled with oil, and the other with water; the pontiff, in his distress, laid hold of the vessel of oil, and poured its contents upon the burning mass, so that the flames being nourished and roused to redoubled fury, the mischief became irreparable.

For the better understanding of this parabolical drama, it should be noticed with respect to these different personages, that Capnio is the Greek word for Reuchlin, to whose superior piety and learning Luther and Melancthon were in early life indebted. Erasmus is the Greek name of Gerhard, of which the Latin is Desiderius; this was the same who so wittily exposed some of the abuses of the friars in colloquies still ranked among our classics, and of whose parents a romantic story has been told. The emperor was *D'Aubigné*,
Maximilian, predecessor of Charles V., a prince b. ii. ch. x. enthusiastic for literature and science, and but little attached to the popes. Leo X. was a pontiff of mild disposition, moderate talents, undecided measures, and most unhappy in his choice of counsellors,—evidently not a man to maintain a falling cause against the almost unanimous feeling of the western world.

A reference to history would shew the justice of this parable. Reuchlin and Erasmus at the latter end of the fifteenth century exposed many of the

corruptions of the church of Rome, and made some partial and ineffectual attempts at producing reformation. But it was Luther who threw into the dry and combustible matter the spark which kindled a flame, such as the efforts of the emperor could not extinguish, and the exertions of the pope only tended to increase.

*See Riddle's
Luther.*

The date of Martin Luther's birth at Eisleben, in Saxony, was the 10th November, 1483, and the circumstances of his parents were very humble, though they afterwards improved. His mother instilled into his youthful mind early principles of piety and virtue, and his father gave him, first in the immediate neighbourhood, and afterwards at a greater distance, the advantages of the best instruction.

He was designed for the profession of the law; but two singular events—the assassination of one of his university friends, by name Alexis,—and his own exposure to danger in a violent storm, gave life and energy to feelings that had long struggled in his breast, and he resolved on the adoption of a monastic life.

At first his views were manifestly erroneous and imperfect; laying an undue stress upon good works, and undervaluing that true and lively faith in Christ, of which doctrine he was afterwards so eminent a teacher. On the subject of the Lord's Supper, he, unhappily, continued in partial error;

but on the article of justification by faith only, he thought truly when he said, "It is the *heel* that crushes the serpent's head."

The first circumstance which roused the public *A.D.* 1517. indignation of Luther was the sale of indulgences as practised by one John Tetzel, a monk of the Dominican order. The money to be raised was for the completion of the building of St. Peter's at Rome,—an edifice worthy to be the cathedral of the queen of cities; and which beholds its miniature likeness in the English metropolitan church, named after the Apostle of the Gentiles.

So eager was Tetzel in his object—the acquisition of money—that in Christian charity we must hope that he did not see the practical evil of such a system, although blindness to the consequences of his own doctrine is but an indifferent apology.

Luther, however, burned with honest and pious indignation when he found numbers of his own flock, while he was confessor at the chapel of the Augustinian monastery at Wittenberg, claiming immediate absolution, even for grievous sins, by virtue of letters of indulgence, which at the same time they presented. The opposition thus commenced led to protests, censures, resolutions, and explanations. The Pope felt called upon to interfere. An examination before Cardinal Cajetan

followed, which made the doctrines of Luther better known, and their truth more apparent. After a time there were public disputations. The celebrated Philip Melancthon, (otherwise Schwarzerd or Black-earth,) a man of superior learning and acuteness, of singularly sincere and simple character, of equal purity in morals and integrity in general conduct, declared himself on the side of the Reformer. The followers of Huss took courage, and predicted the continuance and success in Saxony of the work which they had commenced in Bohemia under the direction of their zealous martyr.

- A.D.* 1519. The death of Maximilian, and the rival claims of Charles I. of Spain (afterwards the renowned Emperor Charles V.) and Francis I. of France, occasioned a short but memorable interregnum, during which the interests of true religion were much forwarded by the freedom that was allowed to publication, to enquiry, and to debate. The main event, however, which gave an impetus to the increasing zeal for reformation, was a measure adopted by the Pope, Leo X., in the hope of silencing the new opinions, and crushing their honest advocate. “God taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong.” A bull, published in anger, *Job* v. 13. *A.D.* 1520. sentenced Luther to excommunication; but the people of Germany were indignant at its publi-

cation, and insulted *Eck*, the nuncio, who made it known. At first, Luther affected to treat the bull as a mere invention and artifice of his enemies; but not long after, he took a decisive step, which involved his open and final rupture with the Church of Rome. He censured the bull and its authors as anti-Christian, and he defended the propositions which had been pointedly condemned of heresy; nay, more than this, after a public notice of his intention, in a large assembly of the people convoked on the occasion, he committed Leo's obnoxious censure to the flames. This was a direct abjuration of the Pope's authority, a step which required no ordinary courage, which Luther had not previously anticipated, and which would have been scarcely justifiable under less peculiar circumstances. But Luther had been condemned of heresy, and had been desired to recant: the investigations into which he had been led, had convinced him of the corruptions of the Romish Church, and of the necessity of maintaining and proclaiming the truth as it is in Jesus. He knew of the doctrine, that it was of God; and he was supported and stimulated by his faith, which taught him to believe that "this matter had not originated in himself, or could be carried on successfully by merely human means, and that if it was of God it would be perfected in a manner perhaps contrary to, and cer-

tainly far exceeding his most sanguine expectations.”*

It is not probable that Luther would have ventured on so bold a measure, had he not relied on the support of Frederick the Elector of Saxony, surnamed the wise. “Him,” says D’Aubigné, an elegant historian of the great Reformation in the sixteenth century, “God selected to serve as a tree, under shadow of which the seed of Truth might put forth its first shoot without being rooted up by the tempests raging round it.” It was he who founded the University of Wittemberg, which was destined to be the nursery of the Reformation.

A. D. 1521. The following year opens to us the second act of the German Reformation, and the first scene of it is the appearance of Luther, wonderfully sustained at the Diet of Worms, before Charles V. and a goodly assemblage of nobles and bishops from almost all the courts of Europe. His courage before princes, ignorant of the truth, and against the artful and practised oratory of accusers, is not unworthy of a comparison with that of Paul before Felix, when Tertullus was engaged to plead against him. Both were supported in

* See D’Aubigné’s Reformation, book vii. ch. 5., for Luther’s caustic running commentary on the Bull, which is too long to be quoted here, but would well repay perusal.

the hour of trial by the grace of God, and, agreeably with the promise of our Lord, it was given to each what he should say.

After twelve months' imprisonment, produced by the friendly violence of the Elector of Saxony, lest his life should be endangered, Luther returned *A.D.* 1522. to Wittemberg, checked the injudicious zeal of some disciples of his doctrine, and prosecuted the German translation of the Bible. While we object to his criticism on the Epistle of St. James, characterizing it as an epistle of straw; and protest against his judgment in exalting one portion of Scripture to the disparagement of another,—we have pleasure in recording the following testimonies to the fidelity and beauty of his translation. "The work," says Mr. Riddle, himself a German scholar, "bears as it were the marks of having been consecrated by the spirit of truth; a richness, harmony, and power of expression which none but a pious mind can be supposed to have thrown over so large and varied a representation of sacred subjects." "Luther," says another, "transfused, rather than translated the Bible into his native language; while that language itself was ennobled and refined by its acceptance of the invaluable treasure which he committed to its charge."

It was about this period that the English king, Henry VIII., from a feeling of vanity, or from

desire to please the Pope, published a work, in which he condemned Luther and his followers, and maintained the doctrine of the seven sacraments. As an acknowledgement for this service, the Pope (Leo X.) granted him the title of Defender of the Faith;* and his successors continue to retain it, in a spirit more according with our views than with those under which it was at that time given.

A.D. 1524. A few years later, Cardinal Compeggio, who afterwards was sent to England, induced the German princes to confederate in opposition to Luther and to his opinions; but the formation of a league on religious and ecclesiastical affairs, formed a precedent dangerous, as it presently appeared, to the cause which the Cardinal was anxious to promote.

Some check was now offered to the progress of the Reformation by the rising of the humbler classes, called in history "the war of the peasants," whose spirits had been roused by the passing events, and who had mistaken the true character of Christian liberty. They imperfectly understood their preachers, who wished to explain the privilege they possessed in the liberty of the Gospel, and knew not the meaning of the paradox, that the Christian who would be lord of all must be servant of all, nor that duty to princes

* This title had been previously borne by several of the kings of England.

and governors is perfectly consistent with, and indeed a necessary ingredient in the rational liberty of subjects.

An unhappy difference of opinion amongst the Reformers themselves, or, rather, the unhappy spirit of acrimony in which the controversy was carried on, formed another check to the advancement of their work. While disputing about Luther's views on the holy communion of the Lord's Supper, (which admitted the idea of consubstantiation, viz., the presence of the actual substance of the body and blood, together with the bread and wine,) and the more approved opinions of Zwingle, the Swiss Reformer, in favour of their faithful reception, and of their *consecrated*, not *divine*, character; these mighty champions of the faith gave the Lord's enemies occasion to blaspheme, and have held up for our example a notable warning, that we should rather agree to disagree, than rend the body of Christ by needless separations and divisions.

The German princes, however, declared for the Reformation, and united to effect that object. The Reformed faith became general through the Hessian dominions, under the patronage of Philip, Landgrave of Hesse; monasteries were deserted; and property, which had been employed for the purpose of Romish superstitions, was diverted to the foundation and support of

schools, of hospitals, and of other useful institutions.

The churches of Saxony (unhappily, for the separation was schismatical, and yet almost of necessity, for the bishops would not reform the churches,) withdrew themselves from the jurisdiction of the Romish bishops. They were visited by the elector of that country, and received a set of instructions prepared by Melancthon, which, like our own homilies of later days, breathed a pure spirit of evangelical truth, and rendered suitable assistance to the less instructed clergy.

A.D. 1525. About this time, Luther married, and thus, while he openly condemned the Romish law of celibacy in the priesthood, he added the weight of his example to the precept he had long taught, viz. that marriage was a holy estate, and honourable in all men.

A rupture between the Pope and the emperor Charles V. (who only regarded ecclesiastical matters as they were subservient to his political interests and designs) gave fresh courage to the friends of the Reformation. The imprisonment of the Pope, and the plundering of Rome by the Imperial army, was a heavy blow to his temporal power, and, by this degradation to his person, also to his spiritual rule.

A.D. 1529. Two years after this event, the affairs of the Reformation formed the principal subject of de-

bate at the famous diet of Spiers, in Germany; and upon the majority deciding to continue severe measures against the spread of new doctrines, where they had not already made any considerable impression, the reforming princes entered a formal *protest*, the origin of our word *Protestant*, on the ground "that they could not submit to the decision of a majority in matters of conscience."

In the following year, at the diet of Augsburg, *A.D.* 1530. to which we have already had occasion to allude, the *Protestants* presented and were permitted to read a summary of their opinions, which has become celebrated in ecclesiastical history under the title of "The Augsburg Confession." It had been prepared by Melancthon, and was drawn up with all his characteristic moderation, piety, and learning. Upon an attempt at refutation by the Romanists, which satisfied the emperor, an apology, or defence of the confession, was prepared by the same champion for the truth, and it is regarded as one of the most learned summaries of doctrine which the defenders of the Reformation have bequeathed to the Christian Church.

The result of the diet was so unfavourable to the cause of the Reformers, that even their lives and property were not safe unless they consented, within a given time, to abjure the "new opinions." The danger then warranted what Luther and the clergy hitherto had generally discour-

tenanced,—a powerful confederacy among the protesting princes for their mutual protection and support. The league of Smalcalde, which was formed in consequence, induced the Emperor to assume a more moderate and conciliatory tone, and a temporary free exercise of religious doctrines and discipline was allowed, though much to the disappointment of the Pope.

The death of Clement VII. and the succession of Paul III. to the Papal chair, made little difference to the cause of the Reformation in Germany. It was not with individuals, but with principles and abuses, that the Protestants were at war. But as the Emperor happened to be involved in a new contest with Francis I., he was more tolerant and lenient towards his German subjects; and a common hostility to the Pope at this time nearly occasioned an alliance between Germany and England.

In the year 1535, the supremacy of the Pope had been abjured in England, and Henry VIII. had declared himself head of the English Church. While the Germans were principally anxious to secure his friendship, because by his means they hoped to promote the publication of their doctrines, the King of England wished to strengthen himself, in case of an open rupture with the Emperor. The Protestant princes, however, steadily refused to enter into any treaty against the Em-

peror of Germany ; and as Henry came by degrees to a good understanding with Charles V., he behaved to his new friends with coolness, and proposals for a treaty came to an abrupt conclusion.

The Protestants were, however, materially strengthened by the cessation of the doctrinal dispute between the German and the Swiss divines, on the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Although the agreement was not complete, it was sufficiently so to admit of their acting together more in concert. The Swiss Reformers, with the talented Bucer, (equally learned and acute,) were they who made the greatest concession, and (as words admissible by both parties could be adopted) in doing so perhaps showed no less superiority than they had formerly evinced in their doctrine and their argument.

The King of Denmark also enrolled himself a member of the League ; but this progress of the Protestant cause induced the princes of the opposite party to confederate in what they termed a "Holy alliance for the maintenance of religion and mutual protection."

About the same time also the Emperor concluded a ten years' peace with France ; and Francis, having no longer a purpose to serve, withdrew his favour from the Protestants. When Germany was thus divided into two parties, each armed for war, but

neither commencing the attack, it pleased God to remove by death George, Duke of Saxony, an old and determined opponent of the Reformation, and
A.D. 1539. his Dukedom was inherited by his brother Henry, a member of the League of Smalcalde. The new Duke applied himself immediately to the introduction of religious freedom and of scriptural instruction, and to the general improvement of religious worship.

In each successive diet the affairs of the Church formed the subject of discussion, but little good was effected, except that the Protestants imperceptibly gained ground by being allowed to question the infallibility of Rome, and to adduce their scriptural arguments against her errors and abuses. On the other hand, the Order of Jesus (or Society
A.D. 1540. of Jesuits) was formally established by Paul III., and ably it discharged the office for which it had been instituted, viz. supporting and promoting the Roman Catholic religion.

On the 18th February, 1546, died Martin Luther, in his native town of Eisleben, in his 63d year, and almost without any previous illness. In his latest words he spake of his dearest Saviour and Redeemer, and several times repeated the words of the 31st psalm, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit." It pleased God to allow Luther to enter into his rest (agreeably to the expressed wish of his own prayers) before he should see the

commencement of a religious war in Germany. But as soon as he was removed, the storm that had long been gathering began to burst.

The Council of Trent met in 1546, and the Protestant princes, who had refused to attend, assembled at the diet of Ratisbon and rejected its decrees. Then the Emperor proceeded to enforce obedience by the power of arms. Some resisted, and some were bought over by promises. Victory declared for the Emperor, and the Protestant cause appeared to be altogether ruined.

But man's extremity is God's opportunity. His watchful over-ruling Providence sometimes allows all human aids to fail, and the most alarming dangers to threaten before He puts forth his hand to save and defend us; as if He would effectually teach men to say, "Not unto us, O Lord, *Psalm cxv.* not unto us, but unto thy name, give the praise:" — "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous *Matt. xxi.* in our eyes." While the Council was sitting at^{42.} Trent, a plague broke out there, or, at least, was believed to have appeared. The Council was transferred to Bologna, and thus in effect dissolved, for the Pope refused to re-assemble it. The delay that followed gave Maurice, who had succeeded his father Henry, as Duke of Saxony, and had gone over to the Emperor, time for reflection; and he determined on a change of conduct. By surprising the Emperor, he compelled him to conclude

a treaty favourable to the Protestants, and, in accordance with a promise then given, the diet of Augsburg was assembled, A.D. 1555.

There, at length, a religious peace was established, by which, under divine Providence, the Protestants acquired the unmolested enjoyment of those privileges which the Reformation had taught them to value and to seek, viz. freedom from papal interference and complete toleration in religious matters. The great allies of Luther, though in some points they differed and their exertions were called for on another stage, were Ulrich Zuinglius and John Calvin. The former was the faithful preacher of Switzerland, and was conspicuous for the gentleness of his disposition, and for the soundness of his judgment; although on the subject of the real presence in the Lord's Supper he fell as far short of the truth as Luther had exceeded it. The following parallel between him and his German coadjutor has been drawn by the pleasing author to whom already allusion has been made:—

D'Aubigné, “Zwingle possessed the same faith as Luther, but better ordered than his. Impulse predominated in Luther, in Zwingle clearness of exposition. Luther's writings evince a deep-felt personal sense of the value of Christ's cross to himself; and this feeling, full of warmth and life, is the soul of all he says. The same thing is no doubt to be

A.D. 1484,
to 1531.

D'Aubigné,
b.viii.ch.ix.

found in Zwingle's works, but in an inferior degree. He looked more on the whole constitution of the Christian system; he admired it especially on account of the beauty he discovered in it, the light it pours upon the human mind, and the eternal life it brings to the world. The one is more the man of heart, the other more the man of intellect: and this is the reason why those who do not know by their own experience the faith that animated those two great disciples of the Lord, have fallen into the gross error of making the one a mystic, and the other a rationalist. The one is perhaps more impassioned in the exposition of the faith, the other more philosophic; but both believed the same truths. They do not perhaps regard all secondary matters from the same point of view; but that faith which is one, that faith which quickens, and justifies whoever possesses it, that faith which no confession, no article of doctrine can express, exists in the one as in the other."

Calvin was of a later date. Born in France in 1509, at a very early age he distinguished himself *A.D.* 1532. in Paris. In 1536 he visited Geneva; but the people were not then prepared to submit to his rigorous discipline. He was, however, recalled thither five years afterwards, and acquired very great influence. After a life of holy self-denial and active zeal, he died in 1564. He was a man of

great genius, considerable learning, and irreproachable private character; but of a zeal which was too little under the guidance of Christian charity. His views on some particulars have been differently represented, and it is probable that the eagerness of his followers has induced them to exceed his opinions on the much-contested points of predestination and election. It cannot, however, be denied, that some expressions in his Institutes warrant what are called Supra-lapsarian views.

Not having received holy orders, his position as a preacher in the Church was clearly irregular, and can only be excused by the difficulties of the times, when the bishops on the Continent were too generally under the influence of the Pope, and the Reformers were condemned as heretics, and cast out of the Church. Some have conceived that in so extreme a case a Christian community may ordain its own pastors, and the adherents of the Reformation in Germany and Switzerland were reduced to this alternative, either to cease their protests against error, from lack of preachers, or to take into their own hands the appointment of ministers. We cannot wonder, and scarcely can regret, that they pursued the latter course; though we lament that they have not since availed themselves of the more certain channel of episcopal authority and apostolical succession open to

them through the ministrations of the Anglican Church. They introduced, and particularly by the aid of Calvin, a form of Church discipline, and invested a consistory with power to inflict canonical censures and excommunications. To this the magistrates and people of Geneva promised obedience, and thus a presbytery was recognised, and a presbyterian form of Church government established.

Modern presbyterians, however, are not content with this account of the matter, and denying that it was a mere result of necessity, urge the supposed authority of some texts of Scripture, and, with a surprising ignorance of facts, the practice of antiquity. A slight allusion to their views has been already made, and another observation might be requisite if we were speaking of the English nonconformists.

Having now traced the course of the German Reformation from its origin to its completion, we have had abundant opportunity of seeing the will of God working its own results, by means, humanly speaking, totally inefficient. The only solution of the difficulty is that which was given by Luther in an early stage of his proceeding, at a time when he did not dream of overthrowing the authority of the Pope of Rome, or of being, what he jocularly called himself, the Pope of Germany. "If this

contest," said he, while writing to an early friend, "be really of God, it will not be ended until truth effectually save itself by its own right hand : not by mine, nor by yours."

LECTURE X.

A slight Sketch of the History of the Anglican Church, with notices of its condition under the successive Kings of England, until the accession of Henry VIII.

HAVING pursued the general stream of ecclesiastical history, from the first promise of our Lord to build a Church upon a rock, to the end of the fifteenth century, we have endeavoured to distinguish between the innovations of heresy, and the doctrines of the faithful ; and we have watched the gradual growth of error and superstition in the people,—of tyranny, and of ambition in the see of Rome,—until the increase of abuses loudly proclaimed the necessity for a reformation. We have, moreover, named a few of the individuals whom God raised up for the preservation of the truth, and noticed the concurrence of events which united with the invention of the art of printing to effect that object. During this period the scene of our history has been principally laid upon the Continent, because our object has been to shew by the creeds and articles, and protests of

the councils and bishops, what has been the voice of the Church in every succeeding age. When error supplanted orthodoxy in the capital of the Western world, we followed the banished Woman into the wilderness, and bore witness to her primitive simplicity among the Alpine valleys. Some allusion also was necessarily made to the character of the religion as received in England; but its more detailed examination was left for a separate inquiry. The time for such inquiry has now arrived,—for England was so much involved in the details of the Reformation, that from that time, she became the principal theatre of action. It is important first to show her early independence of the bishops of Rome, and of the errors of Popery; and next to inquire into the circumstances which prepared and advanced the work of reformation in that country.

If the Anglican Church was scripturally subject to the Pope of Rome, her rejection of his authority would look like rebellion. If she were a modern Church, and the Roman Church an ancient one, she might be schismatic. If she have no higher name than Luther, on which to raise her fabric, she is something different from the Holy Catholic Church, whose corner-stone is Jesus Christ, and her pillars, apostles, saints, and martyrs. The marks, therefore, which have been shewn to characterize the Church of Christ, must

now be traced in the lineaments of the Church of England, if we would repel the charges which Romanists have brought against her.

The earliest religion known in Britain was that of the Druids,—a system which added many conceits of the imagination to the glimmerings of patriarchal faith, and to the traditional knowledge of patriarchal history, that were received into the country.

When the Romans established themselves as conquerors, the authority of the Druids was destroyed, and one system of idolatry was exchanged for another, as far as Roman civilization was extended: but by whom Christianity was first introduced to its inhabitants, it is not now possible to ascertain. Fuller, the acute church historian, says, “The light of the world shone here, but we know not who kindled it.” Some traditions have referred the honour to Bran, the father of Caractacus, who, during his captivity, having heard the word at Rome, became the means of delivering his countrymen from the more enslaving bonds of ignorance and superstition; others have inferred that Claudia, to whom St. Paul has borne honour-^{2 Tim. iv.} able testimony, in association with the name of^{21.} Pudens, was a British lady of that illustrious household; because a British woman is known to have been the wife of Pudens at that time. Legends also have spoken of the conversion and baptism of

King Lucius, who, in the sixth century, was tributary to the Romans. But as these things are doubtful, we lay no emphasis upon them. It has been asserted that *St. Paul* preached in England; but notwithstanding the arguments in favour of this idea put forth by the learned Bishop Burgess, late of Salisbury, it is unsafe to draw such a conclusion from the vague phrases that are quoted from the fathers in confirmation of it. Moreover, traditions have been held respecting St. James, Simon Zelotes, St. Philip, and St. Peter, having visited this country, but with no better certainty of proof. Upon the idea that Joseph of Arimathea was the founder of Glastonbury Abbey, a talented and learned modern writer has observed, that it is a fable, unworthy of notice, had not Queen Elizabeth and Archbishop Parker ventured to claim him as the first preacher of Christianity in England; but, he adds, the absurdity of the whole story has been fully established by Stillingfleet. In a note, however, he informs us, on the authority of Fuller, that at the council of Basil, "the English bishops claimed precedence on the ground of the conversion of Britain by Joseph."

It is nevertheless certain that before the close of the third century, (during the tenth, or Dioclesian, persecution,) the Church in England was sufficiently introduced to warrant in the eyes of

the Romans the use of the prison and the axe against those who refused to sacrifice to their gods ; and thus it was counted worthy to pass through the fire of persecution for the sake of Christ.

It will be interesting to record the name of the supposed first English martyr, Alban, from whom both the abbey, and the town in which he suffered, have been named St. Albans. So long as that abbey shall exist, it seems to stand a monument to the honour of its namesake, and of the other early martyrs.

“It was superstition in the Athenians,” said the worthy Fuller, “to build an altar to the unknown God ; but it would be piety in us here to erect a monument in memorial of these unknown martyrs whose names are lost. The best is, God’s Kalendar is more complete than man’s best martyrologies ; and their names are written in the book of life, who on earth are wholly forgotten.” The comparatively perfect state of preservation in which that abbey stands,—its antiquity as the work of Offa, king of Mercia, and the solemn thoughts which its venerable aisles suggest, as trodden by successive bands of saints and martyrs, prompt the pious thought that it be not left unaided to crumble beneath the hand of time, and teach us to anticipate in hope the day when once more it shall resound with the cathe-

dral service, and again be dignified by the presence of a bishop's throne.

Although, however, Fuller thus speaks of the early martyrs as forgotten, he himself records the names of some,—and among the rest, of *Augilius, a bishop of London*,—a title which implies that an allotment of ecclesiastical governments had already taken place, and thereby that the Church in England was no longer in its first stage of infancy.

A. D. 230. In support of the same idea, Origen bears testimony in his sixth homily upon the first chapter of Saint Luke, saying, “The divine goodness of our God and Saviour is equally diffused amongst the Britons, the Africans, and other nations of the world.” But, perhaps, the most satisfactory witness to the early, distinct, and independent existence of the Church in England is to be found in the records of the council of Arles, which was assembled by Constantine against the Donatists, who had fallen into schism on account of the election of a bishop of Carthage, in the year 314. These records state, that three English bishops were present on that occasion; and the manner in which that council communicated its canons to the bishop of Rome proves that the representatives of the Churches, there assembled, esteemed

Stillingfleet themselves quite independent of his authority.

p. 84.

It is probable that there were English bishops

at the council of Nice, in Bithynia, assembled by Constantine against the Arians, and to which *A.D.* 325. we have already alluded; and it is more clearly established that they were present at Sardica, in *A.D.* 347. Thrace, and at Ariminum, in Italy. The former *A.D.* 359. of these councils was assembled to judge between the Arians and Athanasius; and its details contain many arguments against the right of appeals^{i. 30.} to the Pope; and, with regard to the latter, it is related that the British bishops generally refused to receive the allowance made to them from the Emperor; while three of them only accepted it: a proof at once of the number and wealth of the British bishops who attended.

To the age that immediately followed are *A.D.* 432. ascribed the exertions of Saint Patrick, who is said to have converted the whole Irish nation to Christianity; although it is acknowledged that before him Palladius had been sent from Rome, as bishop, expressly for that purpose. It is at the same time asserted, that the Church of Ireland during those ages remained independent, and was not subject to the Papal jurisdiction.

It thus appears that there had been a considerable degree of pure religion among our ancestors before the invasion of the Saxons; that even after the declension and decay of true religion, which must be partially attributed to the errors of Pelagianism, there were still faithful pastors, and

these carried back into France that spirit of godliness which the latter country, by Germanicus of Auxerre, had previously sent over into our island.

The French province of Britany derived its name, as well as a pure knowledge of the faith of the Gospel, from a number of Britons who had been expelled from their country by the arms of the Anglo-Saxons; and in Wales and Cornwall, and in some parts of Scotland and Ireland, the seeds of truth were carefully cultured by the bishops and clergy who had fled thither, although the greater part of England was covered with Saxon idolatry. No barbarians were ever more ferocious or more superstitious. The whole kingdom was divided amongst their chiefs, and the fanes of idolatry triumphed to a frightful extent over the temples of Christianity. The Britons, happy if they could retain their worship to themselves, made no exertions to convert their conquerors, and the first effort for that purpose was left to the zeal of a stranger. Gregory the Great, of Rome, about 150 years after the arrival of the Saxons in Britain, having been interested in the cause by the sight of some English prisoners exposed for sale at Rome, sent missionaries for

A.D. 597. that purpose into Britain.

The chief of those missionaries was Augustine, who was kindly received by Ethelbert and his

Christian queen, Bertha, the daughter of the French monarch, Caribert ; and for whom it had been stipulated that she should be permitted to make free profession of the religion in which she had been educated. When Ethelbert had resolved upon embracing the same truths, he gave a mansion in Canterbury, with a licence to preach, to Augustine and his followers, and Augustine returning into France, received ordination as the archbishop of the English Church from the bishop of Arles.

Here we must pause to notice a few particulars that are important to Englishmen, who have protested against the errors of Popery, and, claiming to be members of the true Church, profess to derive the authority of their priesthood uncorrupted from the hands of the Apostles.

By going abroad for episcopal ordination, Augustine acknowledged the importance of authority being properly delegated. His commission as archbishop was not a mere royal grant, nor was it sufficient that his colleagues should elect him to that office. Besides the protection of the king, and the consent of his followers, he required also that he should be consecrated to his office by one who was already a bishop.

If this argument be of any weight for the *consecration* of those who are already priests, to the office of bishop or archbishop, it must have more

force when applied to the ordaining of men to the ministry of the Word ; so that no man may take this office on himself before he be called and sent to this work by men having authority in the congregation to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard.

Again, by going to *Arles*, and not to *Rome*, for consecration, Augustine supplies an argument against the right of Rome to exercise authority over English bishops, and relieves those prelates from an objection that might in some minds exist against the purity of the channel through which their commission from the Apostles has been transmitted.

It is not disputed that Augustine came from Rome by the desire of Gregory ; nor that he afterwards wrote to him with reports of his success, and for the solution of existing difficulties ; nor that upon his intimating that the harvest was plenteous and the labourers were few, more missionaries were sent to him from Rome. But these are only the natural steps when one people attempts to evangelize another. No claim of supremacy was set up. Augustine was recognized as metropolitan of all England, and was recommended to constitute a bishop at York who might have other subordinate bishops. There was also a strong expression of desire to maintain unity among believers, and the superior character of the Roman

Church naturally enough led to some assumption of superiority by these new preachers at the time of their arrival. They at first dealt only with heathens, and doubtless felt themselves to be farther advanced in scriptural and in secular knowledge, in morals and in manners, in intelligence and in civilization, than those to whom they preached. When, however, they afterwards discovered among the Britons, and particularly at Bangor, a pure portion of the Christian Church governed by godly men, and among them seven bishops and an archbishop, they made overtures for union, and held conferences on the subject. If we could understand the feelings of both parties at the time, we should not wonder, however much we may regret, that they did not agree. The Welch bishops had followed the Eastern churches in their time of keeping Easter, and did not perform baptism in the Roman manner: these practices they were unwilling to alter at the recommendation, or, as it seemed to them, dictation of a haughty stranger. By so doing, they would acknowledge their ancestors to have been wrong; while they, the ancient bishops of the island, would submit to the authority of a new and younger man, of whom they did not entirely approve. It probably would have seemed to them a worse conquest than that of the Saxons, if the government of the Church, which they had hi-

therto preserved, were committed to the hands of a Frank or of a Roman.

We cannot wonder, then, that they refused to yield the points required. But can we blame Augustine? He had been educated in the belief that his opinions were confirmed by the practice of the Church from the time of the Apostles: he doubtless despised the Britons as men of less cultivated intellects than himself and his companions: he, moreover, must have condemned their supineness in leaving the work of converting the Saxons from the follies of idolatry, to be conducted by the zeal and piety and eloquence of others, while they were on the spot with all the machinery of a church and the knowledge of the truth: and, besides this, he must have felt some distrust of yielding to the opinions of men whom he supposed to be tainted with heresy; for whatever knowledge Rome had of the faith of Britain it was derived from her acquaintance with Pelagius and his doctrine, and which we have already noticed as proceeding from the coast of Wales.

We are not then surprised, that, relying on the authority of his mission, on the holiness of his cause, and on the energy of his faith, Augustine refused to coalesce, and that he proceeded in his object independently of the British bishops.

Nevertheless, it was to Arles, and not to Rome, that he went for consecration, and consequently if

there *were* anything corrupt in the line of Romish bishops so as to invalidate their claim to apostolical succession, such a charge could not in consequence be brought against the Anglican Church.

It should be borne in mind that such claim in the Romish Church has not been invalidated, and ought not to be denied. The Romanists have been as careful as the Anglicans that ordination and consecration should be regularly performed by bishops, who had themselves been apostolically ordained; so that even if Augustine had been consecrated at Rome, instead of at Arles, it would not have interfered with his authority to ordain and consecrate others: at the same time, we rejoice, if, by this means, any scruple is removed from a brother in the faith, who may have imbibed a holy horror of the name of Rome. To show that this is no private view, but the received opinion of the Church, it should be mentioned that if a Roman Catholic priest were publicly to abjure his errors and to desire communion with the Reformed Church, he would be forthwith received and acknowledged as a priest without fresh ordination. It has sometimes been objected that the Anglican Church is thus easy towards a Romanist, whom it has condemned as idolatrous, and as preaching another Gospel; while it requires a Wesleyan minister, or a Baptist, who differs in matters of form rather than of faith, to be ordained

by our bishops, before it allows him to minister in the congregation. But herein there is complete consistency, and the difficulty is solved by observing the doctrine of apostolical succession. In the one case, that of the Roman Catholic priest, we acknowledge the authority which has sent him to preach, although we protest against his errors, and therefore, upon abjuring the errors, we object not to his preaching; in the other, although we allow he may be doing God's work, we do not allow that he is doing it as God hath willed and commanded it to be done, and therefore we refuse to grant him the lot of ministration until he consents to receive his commission from the successors of the Apostles.

Upon the improbability, or moral impossibility that this succession should have been lost we shall have farther to remark when we come, in the course of our review, to the consecration of Archbishop Parker, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. But it is needful to remember, that however much men might object to receive a teacher from Rome in the present day, as their ecclesiastical reformer, or the guide of their doctrine, however much men may think that the corruptions of Rome have cut her off from the true Church of Christ, or that the worldliness and sensuality of some of her bishops may invalidate her title to apostolical succession; such objections do not apply to the times of

Augustine, nor to the character of Gregory the Great. As human motives mix themselves with all we do, we need not suppose Gregory and Augustine, however superior in mind, and zeal, and learning, to have been exempt from human frailty; and consequently ambition and temporal fame may have sharpened the talents and stimulated the exertions of these men; but in the main their object was to give light to them that sat in darkness, to preach the Gospel to the heathen, to break the image that defrauded God of his honour, and to uplift the standard of the cross upon the shores of England. Properly speaking, there was no *popery* then: as we have seen, corruptions had commenced, superstition was willing to profit by the mistakes of men, and some opinions that were heretical had been proclaimed; but Rome was not the great cause of those errors; although somewhat fallen, and leaning towards such errors as monkery, and the celibacy of the clergy, reverence for relics and the cross, and undue commemoration of Saints' days, she was essentially Protestant: protesting against the errors of Paganism, Arianism, and Pelagianism; protesting against idolatry and immorality; maintaining the truths contained in the three creeds now repeated in our churches; not claiming infallibility or supremacy.

"And now," says Fuller, "we take our farewell of Augustine, of whom we give this character: he

found here a plain religion (simplicity is the badge of antiquity) practised by the Britons, living, some of them in contempt, and many more in ignorance of worldly vanities, in a barren country; and surely piety is more healthful in those places where it can least surfeit of earthly pleasures. He brought in a religion spun with a coarser thread, though guarded with a finer trimming, made luscious to the senses with pleasing ceremonies; so that many who could not judge of the goodness were caught with the gaudiness thereof. However, we commend his pains, condemn his pride, allow his life, approve his learning, admit the foundation of his doctrine, Jesus Christ, but refuse the hay and stubble he built thereon. We are indebted to God's goodness in moving Gregory—to Gregory's carefulness in sending Augustine—to Augustine's forwardness in preaching here; but above all, let us bless God's exceeding great favour, that that doctrine which Augustine planted here, but impure, and his successors made worse with watering, is since, by the happy Reformation, cleared and refined to the purity of the Scriptures."

It cannot however be denied that before the
A.D. 668. end of the next century, when an Archbishop of York, Wilfred, appealed to Pope Vitalian on the subject of the division of his see, that prelate embraced the opportunity of attempting an encroach-

ment. His claim however to spiritual supremacy was resisted by Theodore Archbishop of Canterbury, and by Alfred King of Northumberland; and it was not till after the death of that prince and of his immediate successor, that Wilfred was in his old age reinstated in a part of his prefer- *Short, p. 12* ments.

The union of the several kingdoms of the Heph-
tarchy, or, as we are now taught to call it, the *Turner,*
Octarchy, would probably have been beneficial to *b. ii. ch. iv.*
the interests of Christianity, had not the succeeding inroads of the Danes more than counterbalanced this advantage. These heathen invaders joined a considerable portion of animosity against the Christian Clergy to their love of plunder: and as much of the wealth of the country was generally contained in the monasteries, their savage attacks were chiefly directed against these establishments, which possessed most of the learning, and much of the civilization that was left in England.

Ethelwolf, the father of Alfred, is generally con- *A.D. 855.*
sidered the author of the grant of tithes to the Church, but, as tithes are spoken of long before, there must either have been now a regranting of them, or they must have been liberated from burdens to which they were before exposed.

To Alfred the country was indebted for his revival of the study of literature and establishment of the laws, as well as for his military talent dis-

played in his wars with the Danes. So that no monarch has ever been more cherished in the affections of posterity than he who, in a dark age, and notwithstanding enormous difficulties, distinguished himself both as a scholar and as a patron of literature. His character has been thus sketched by Fuller:—"Consider him as a king in his court, as a general in his camp, as a Christian in his closet, as a patron in the Church, as a founder in his college, as a father in his family: his actions will every way appear no less excellent in themselves than exemplary to others."

The history of the Church in England during the tenth and eleventh centuries, presents to our view a continued struggle between the ecclesiastical and civil power; whether the mitre should triumph over the crown, or the king invade the rights and property of the Church.

Odo and Dunstan, who were successively Archbishops of Canterbury, joined to their true zeal for Christianity an inordinate desire to extend the influence of their order, with which their personal wealth and power were intimately blended. Prejudice and superstition often favoured a rude and insolent interference with the sovereign; while an appeal to the Pope, which each in turn found it convenient to adopt, riveted the chains of Rome round the neck of England.

The Norman invader made use of the Pope's

authority to gain possession of the country, but he no sooner found himself secure upon the throne, than he declared himself head of all ecclesiastical as well as civil power in his kingdom, and forbade the Clergy to leave the country, to acknowledge any Pope, or to pass sentence of excommunication upon any one connected with himself, without his permission being first obtained.

The rapacity and profaneness of the Norman princes, in the seizure and alienation of ecclesiastical benefices, were justly opposed by the bishops of those times. But it must be regretted that they conducted their opposition rather on the authority of the court of Rome, than on the ground of Scripture and the precedents of the primitive Church.

The unjust title of Henry I. and the usurpation of Stephen made it the interest of those princes to endeavour to propitiate the Clergy, and thus Henry recalled Anselm, whom Rufus had attempted to depose and banish. But Stephen, from his intemperance and injustice, paved the way to his own citation by his brother the Bishop of Winchester, and to the general augmentation *A.D.* 1139. of the power of the Church.

In proportion as the king was deprived of his patronage, the fidelity of his subjects was weakened, his clergy were subjected to a foreign legate,

and the Pope was made the judge of all disputes, and the dispenser of all benefices.

From the time of Stephen to that of Henry VIII., 400 years, the Kings of England, the Popes, and the Bishops were earnestly contending for the mastery, though the constitutions of Clarendon (early in the reign of Henry II.) clearly prove that the ancient customs of England did not recognize papal interference. At one while the injustice, tyranny, and cupidity of the monarchs seized on the lands of convents; at another, the Bishops and the Monks fattened on the credulity and superstition of the people, and bearded the King in his very palace; while the Pope watched every opportunity to increase his power, or to enrich his Church, by reducing royalty to unbecoming tribute and degradation, by appropriating vacant bishoprics, and by presenting to benefices even before a vacancy occurred. He would claim tenths or fifths according to the chances of success, and he exacted rigidly the offering of Peter's pence.

If the kings thought they could resist with impunity, they did not hesitate about resistance, and if the popes could gain any advantages by breaking the terms they had agreed upon, no scruples of conscience deterred them from doing so. Such was their notorious neglect of compacts, that the seal and oath of King John were not taken, without the additional guarantee of three sponsors for

the fulfilment of his promise; and our favourite historian Fuller has declared that in these times they “dealt with oaths as seamen do with the points of the compass, saying them forwards and backwards.” Ecclesiastics were as well if not better skilled in war and in hunting, than in the mass book and the Bible; and some, as Becket, owed their advancement rather to their popular talents or the humour of their prince, than to any fitness for the episcopal or clerical office. *Short, p. 37 note.*

The well known contests which the proud prelate, Thomas à Becket, waged with his sovereign Henry II., afford a striking instance of undue exaltation to the hierarchy in consequence of unjust favouritism, and of the ill effects which follow such a step.

Henry, who was an able prince, though not free from vice, and who really wished to suppress the existing abuses of ecclesiastical power, had doubtless expected, in raising his jovial boon companion *A.D. 1162.* and highly talented chancellor to the office of Archbishop of Canterbury, that he should possess in him an able and a willing promoter of his views of Church reform. But he had mistaken his character, which was not unlike Wolsey’s, only it was compounded of stronger elements, and his mind was of a higher class. His ambition, and erroneous view of the exemption of the clergy from the power of secular courts, even though they

should notoriously and grossly offend against secular laws, presently placed him in a hostile position to his royal master. One stood on the privileges of his order—the other on his prerogative; the breach daily became wider. The Pope was appealed to, and failed not to increase his power in England by the continuance of the contest.

On one occasion Henry II. was so irritated that he refused with an oath the payment of the annual national contribution, known under the name of Peter's Pence; and by this rejection of the Pope's authority, (for although originally a charitable contribution for the maintenance of Englishmen at Rome, its regular remittance had grown into a badge of servitude,) England was then nearly released from foreign interference. But Henry had no Wiclif or Cranmer for his counselor, and his intemperance and superstition, want of firmness, and perhaps want of veracity, made him more the servant of the Pope than he had been before.

The contest with Becket continued, equally troublesome and tedious; until at last, in consequence of a hasty expression of the king, four of the barons in attendance unwarrantably resolved
A.D. 1170. upon the death of the archbishop. They perpetrated the unholy deed before the altar in Canterbury cathedral. By this means a fresh excuse was given for the interference of the Pope; and

the King, horrified at the sacrilegious act, and distressed at the bare suspicion of having been a party to it, subjected himself to the severest penance and deepest humiliation at the tomb of his enemy; and he thus revived the dying embers of superstition in the land, and received more than poetic justice for his share in the archbishop's exaltation.

His sons rose in arms against him; his mind was subdued, and his spirit broken by his misfortunes; and the licentiousness of his former life made him willing to believe in the efficacy of Roman penance, and in the power of papal absolution. These disturbances, and the superstitious fears of the King, as he thought the end of his life approaching, afforded fresh opportunities to the Romish authorities for extending their influence in England, and by these they did not neglect to profit. Not only was Becket canonized, but the meanest artifices were adopted to overawe the feelings of the people. Fictitious miracles were wrought at his tomb; and he was im-^{*Southey,*}
^{*ch. ix.*} piously entreated to make prayers successful at the throne of grace.

A chivalric spirit and a passion for the cru-^{*A.D. 1189.*} sades led Richard I. into distant lands, and scenes of active warfare; and hence his name is not materially connected with the history of the Church in England. His reign, however, affords

an interesting proof that some beneficial results might arise from the spiritual rule even of a Pope, if it were exercised with a due regard to justice, piety, and charity.

On his return from the Holy Land, the lion-hearted king had been treacherously seized by the Duke of Austria, and, having been purchased from him by the emperor of Germany, was thrown into a prison. The indignation which this excited in the other German princes, honourable as it was to them, would hardly have sufficed to obtain his release, unless the Pope had interfered, and threatened the emperor with excommunication, if he persisted in thus wrongfully and inhumanly detaining the most disinterested hero of Christendom. The fear of such a measure, which might have armed all Germany against him, overcame the feelings of personal hatred, and the intrigues of Philip Augustus of France for perpetuating Richard's captivity; and the unworthy emperor restored him to his subjects upon payment of an enormous ransom,—the contribution of which confers immortal honour upon British loyalty.

A.D. 1189. The name of John, although it cannot but give rise to feelings of indignation and disdain, is connected with some of the strongest attempts in favour of ecclesiastical tyranny, and the most successful exertions in behalf of civil liberty.

In the first place, to forward his own views, the Pope decided unjustly to support John's claim to the throne of England, to the prejudice of the rightful heir. He next took advantage of an appeal, which admitted his right to confirm or to annul an election to the see of Canterbury, and, assuming unwarrantable power, he proceeded to set aside both claimants, and appointed Langton to the vacant office. The resistance of John was vain, but the usurpation was rather submitted to as an evil from which there was no escape, than acknowledged as a legal right. The Pope's imperiousness and innovation kept time with John's weakness, which increased daily as he lost the confidence and the respect of his subjects, until, upon the king's refusing to receive the new archbishop, a terrible blow was given to the whole kingdom by placing it under an interdict. A.D. 1208.

The church-doors were closed; no bell called the people to matins or to vespers; no taper was lighted; no service performed. Only baptism was allowed, and confession, and the holy communion to the dying. The dead were either interred in unhallowed ground, without the presence of the priest and the consolations of the prayers; or they were left unburied till this infliction, which affected every family in its tenderest and holiest feelings, was removed. Some little mitigation was allowed, lest the religious

prejudices of the people should be roused into rebellion against so tyrannical an interdict on the due performance of their sacred duties, and the people were called to prayers and a sermon in the churchyards upon the Sunday; and marriages were performed at the church-door.

The reckless and irreligious John cared not for such a step; but, in place of a manly opposition to an unjust interference, he exhibited a total indifference alike to the happiness of his people and to the censures of the Church. If he had proceeded temperately and justly, the people would probably have sided with him against so bold an usurpation of supremacy; but the selfish monarch only made this an excuse for an additional attack against the ecclesiastical revenues, and for imposing fresh oaths of homage upon his abused and distrusted subjects. The Pope, however, knew his power, and by his public sentence of excommunication, he forbade all persons to talk, eat, drink, or counsel with the king. He professed to absolve all subjects from their allegiance, and invited Philip Augustus to take possession of the kingdom.

With a bankrupt exchequer, and with disaffected nobles; the regard of the people alienated, and their superstitious fears aroused; Peter, a hermit of Pomfret, openly predicting that before Ascension Day the king should lose his crown,

and the French monarch with a powerful army threatening invasion; it is no wonder that his craven heart crouched in panic fear before his powerful enemy, and that in the humblest terms John besought the Pope's pardon and protection. So completely was he subdued, that he unintentionally fulfilled the prediction of the Yorkshire prophet, and surrendered his crown, with a large sum of money, to Pandulph, the Pope's legate. *A.D.* 1213. Nevertheless, he had the malignity and the meanness to sentence the hermit to be hanged as a false prophet, and his son was condemned to die with him.

The purpose, however, of the king was answered. The Pope was appeased; for, with wise policy, Innocent III. (the same who at the fourth *A.D.* 1216. Lateran council confirmed the doctrine of Transubstantiation) now saw only the repentant and dutiful son of the Church in this recently rebellious and excommunicated prince.

The extraordinary step which John had taken in acknowledging the Pope's supremacy in England, and subjecting his kingdom to an annual tribute, induced his people, and particularly Langton the primate, and the barons, to demand a renewal of the good laws of his ancestors, and the abrogation of the bad ones. The laws of Edward the Confessor were referred to, and a charter granted by the first Henry was produced. Relying

however on support from Rome, the faithless prince set his barons at defiance, and invaded the rights of his prelates. The barons took up arms, after a short struggle gained possession of London, and compelled the king to seal with the great seal

Southey,
p. 166.

A.D. 1215. famous Magna Charta. 'This precious document, forced from a tyrant by the Church and the aristocracy in behalf of civil and religious liberty, recognised the fundamental principles of a free government, and established wise provisions for the security of the subject, and for the administration of justice.

A.D. 1216. Under the weak rule of Henry III. no successful opposition was made to the exactions of the Pope, and many benefices were given to Italians

A.D. 1273. who resided abroad. But Edward I. encroached on both the rights and the property of the ecclesiastics, for these were now becoming alarmingly great. He disregarded the bull that the Pope published prohibiting princes from taxing church property, and he seized upon the actual possessions of the resisting clergy. Moreover, a statute was passed, declaring that the Church of England

A.D. 1307. was independent of the Church of Rome; and in the reign of Edward II. a similar declaration followed in a different form.

The notice of Wiclif in a former chapter has declared how boldly the same truth was main-

tained in the succeeding reign ; but it should now be noticed that Edward III. refused to con- *A.D.* 1327. tinue the payment which King John had promised, and his parliament resolved to support him *A.D.* 1370. in making this resistance, on the plea that the kingdom could not have been subjected to a foreign power without a national consent, and this had never been obtained.

Things were now apparently ripe for a reform, but it pleased Providence to delay the hour in order that the work might be more complete.

The people of England did not become fully sensible of existing abuses until they pressed upon themselves, and this was especially the case in the matter of tribute. In the reign of Henry III. the extortions of the clergy and of the Pope with his legates had been more than three times the amount of the king's revenue ; but in the time of Edward III. the sum paid to the Pope was five *A.D.* 1376. times as much as that paid to the king. Moreover, the people were not benefited by this charge, for the clergy were in general ignorant, dissolute, and overbearing. As dumb dogs, they gave no notice to their flocks of the enemy at hand. Either from ignorance or from selfish motives, they preached erroneous doctrines, and fleeced the sheep they never fed. As the people found the Pope claiming, and in most cases exercising the right of appointment, their indignation

at the inefficiency of the clergy fell principally upon him ; but the introduction of a new system at this critical moment retarded the work of change, and created a reaction in his favour.

Milner, cent. 13. ch. 6.
A.D. 1207. It was the zeal of a French monk, afterwards called Saint Francis, that stemmed the torrent and turned the tide of popular feeling. Of his devotion we should wish to think highly, if he had not lent himself to a wicked imposture. He submitted to receive five wounds similar to those inflicted on our Saviour at the crucifixion, and professed that they were made by spiritual agency. The scheme was sanctioned at Rome, and he established a society of mendicant friars who abjured the possession of all wealth, either as individuals or as a corporation; lived on the alms of the charitable, and devoted themselves to prayer, and preaching, and visiting the sick. Their success gave rise to another society, founded by Dominic, a Spanish presbyter, and called from

A.D. 1215. him Dominicans, who were avowed agents of the Pope in working the horrors of the Inquisition, and who assisted the Franciscans to exterminate what they denominated "heresy," though on every other point a bitter jealousy and rankling envy made them the deadliest enemies to each other.

One of the signs of rivalry between these two orders is worth recording, because, though trifling in itself, it shews the extent of falsehood to which

they were willing to proceed, and the excess of credulity among the people which encouraged their inventions. Finding that St. Francis had become the fashion rather than their own leader, in consequence of his affected likeness to our Lord, the Dominicans declared that similar marks had been also given to St. Dominic, whom, they added, the Virgin had adopted for her son. As, however, it would have been inconvenient to have exhibited these signs of favour, they said, with some adroitness and unexampled audacity, that Dominic, in his humility, had prayed that this signal proof of Divine Grace might never be made public while he lived. We should smile at such ridiculous imposture, if it were not also blasphemous, and should be amused by specimens of their jealousy and envy, if we did not feel that they were trifling with the truths of God, and risking the souls both of themselves and of their too credulous disciples.

As previously noticed, it was against some of page 188. this generation that Wiclif first raised his voice at Oxford, and by his controversy with them he was led into that quarrel with the Pope which ultimately ripened into an honourable warfare with most of the errors of the Romish church. The name of Wiclif carries us through the times of *A.D.* 1377. Richard II. and Henry IV., when the laws relating *A.D.* 1399. to the interference of the Pope in England seem

to have lain dormant, although these monarchs, as well as their successors, constantly endeavoured to resist when any encroachment was attempted on their own prerogative. They were not however equally scrupulous about themselves interfering with church property. Henry IV. had already cast his eye upon the convents, and his son would probably have commenced this work of spoliation, had he not been recommended to a course of life more suited to his gallant temper; the claim to the crown of France, and the war in which that claim involved him.

A.D. 1413. About the true faith Henry V. seems to have felt little interest, and to have yielded his judgment blindfold to the prelates; but finding or fancying the Lollards or Canters to be dangerous subjects, he readily agreed to their persecution. The doctrine of transubstantiation was made the test at the examinations on the charge of heresy; and to differ from the Romish view, was to be found guilty, and to deserve the faggot.

A.D. 1416. One of the sufferers in this reign, Lord Cobham, Sir John Oldcastle, quoted St. Paul against his examiners, with a view of shewing that that apostle called the consecrated elements, bread and wine, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ; *the bread* which we brake, is it not the communion of

1 Cor. x. 16. the body of Christ;" but it availed him not.

Another was William Sautre, or Sawtry, a London *A.D.* 1401. clergyman, who had recanted through fear of death; but he afterwards died faithfully—the first martyr for the Reformation in England. Upon his wavering and his subsequent repentance, Fuller has remarked, “Let those who severely censure him for once denying the truth, and do know who it was that denied his Master thrice, take heed that they do not as bad a deed more than four times themselves. May Sautre’s final constancy be as surely practised by men, as his former cowardliness, no doubt, is pardoned by God !”

The same excellent historian speaks well upon the disentombing Wiclif’s ashes. His grave was opened forty years after his death; the bones were taken out and burned to ashes, and the ashes were then thrown into a neighbouring brook, called the Swift. “This brook,” says our epigrammatic friend, “conveyed his ashes into Avon—Avon into Severn—Severn into the narrow seas—they into the main ocean: and thus the ashes of Wiclif are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over.” “So,” says Fox, “was he resolved into three elements—earth, fire, and water, thinking thereby utterly to extinguish and abolish both the name and doctrine of Wiclif for ever. But as there is no counsel against the Lord, so there is no keeping

down of verity; it will spring, and come out of dust and ashes, as appeared right well in this man. For, though they digged up his body, burned his bones, and drowned his ashes, yet the word of God, and truth of his doctrines, with the fruit and success thereof, they could not burn. These to this day remain."

A.D. 1422. To Henry VI. Pope Martin V. wrote a severe letter, threatening excommunication: and in the
1461 to 1509 reigns of Edward IV., Richard III., and Henry VII., the same state of things prevailed. The Pope too often exercised a jurisdiction over England, although such interference was repeatedly condemned by the laws, and was pronounced intolerable by the highest constitutional authorities. Besides a feeling of independence, a spirit of cupidity enlisted the government in opposition to the corruptions of Rome, and reform and spoliation went hand in hand; but, under the Providence of God, all things gradually tended to an extensive and beneficial change: the clouds were fast dispersing, and the dawn of the Reformation had begun to break.

LECTURE XI.

The progress of the Reformation in England during the reigns of Henry VIII. and Edward VI., with the check that it received from the Marian Persecution.

It appears from the rapid sketch which we have taken of the Anglican Church until the accession of Henry VIII., that the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome in England, was a gradual encroachment and usurpation—not a part of the original constitution of the British Church.

It was an illegitimate dominion, partially exercised, depending upon circumstances of secular policy, and continually protested against by English bishops, sovereigns, and parliaments, from the day of its first commencement to its close. From this it follows that the Church of England, having never been a part of the Church of Rome, or lawfully subject to its authority, could never be guilty of the sin of schism by any rejection, at whatever time, of papal doctrines, discipline, or practice; and much less is it open to censure, because it resisted the secular authority, supremacy, and interference of the Popes.

But this will be made more evident as we proceed.

The accession of the Eighth Henry to the throne of England was the signal for general rejoicing; for, although in the marriage of his father with the heiress of the line of York the disputes between the Roses were effectually silenced, and although the acknowledged talent of that prince had rendered his reign successful, his ambition, selfishness, and cupidity, had alienated the affection of his subjects. His son, however, inheriting, and even surpassing his talents, (for he wisely profited by the improved learning of his age,) gave indications also of a more generous temper. With every advantage of person, an understanding quick and vigorous, a kingdom at peace, a treasury abundant, commerce flourishing, and the liberal arts advancing,—with a new world just opened to the spirit of adventure, and the discovery of printing beginning to change the character of the old, he entered on his new career, in the fulness of health and youth, with the prayers, and hopes, and congratulations of his subjects, and gave promise of a long and happy reign.

The splendour of his court surpassed the rest of Europe, and it was no less remarkable for its learning. His minister, Wolsey, seconded his taste in both these respects, if he did not lead it by his example. If we look to state and

show, we shall find no man more prodigal ; if to the patronage of letters, and the endowment of houses of learning, no man more munificent than Cardinal Wolsey. His ambitious seeking of the Popedom, and the consequent suspected disregard to national interests, are inexcusable ; his continuance in the doctrine and practices of the Church of Rome, are not to be defended ; but at least he exerted himself to remove the ignorance, and to reform the manners of the clergy of his day. The Church however, unwisely, but, as it afterwards proved, happily neglected to reform herself ; and it was to apparently accidental causes that she was indebted for her release from error.

A king of England requires a divorce, but what has that to do with the triple crown or the thunders of the Vatican ? Catherine of Arragon had been previously married to Henry's elder brother, Arthur, who died young, and the policy of Henry VII. had been to retain the infanta and her dowry by marrying her to his youngest son. Whatever scruples existed, the king and queen lived together for eighteen years, and no farther question was raised respecting the lawfulness of the marriage, until a proposition had been made to marry the Princess Mary with the Duke of Orleans, brother of Francis the First. The French ambassadors questioned the legitimacy of Mary ; and Henry, being anxious for a son to succeed him,

and having fixed his affections upon Anna Boleyn, eagerly embraced the excuse that was thus offered, and sought for a divorce.

As England at that time acknowledged the spiritual rule of the Pope, it was from him that this favour was entreated; but Clement, the then possessor of the papal chair, was at first a close prisoner in the hands of the Imperialists, and after his release could take no steps to advance Henry's object without risking the displeasure of Charles V., the nephew of Catherine. "His policy was," as Fuller says, "to prolong the suit; for, whilst it depended, he was sure of two good friends; but, when it should be decided, of one great foe." Accordingly, he had recourse to procrastinations, and successive excuses for delay.

This had exasperated the self-willed monarch; Wolsey was disgraced, and Henry was ready, for any pretence, to make an open rupture with the Pope. Then opportunely, and as we should say
See Blunt, p. 177. accidentally, if the result had not proved it to be providentially, came the meeting with Cranmer. His bold, but scriptural advice, shook the authority of the Pope. By an appeal to the Word of God, and by referring the question to the various Universities, he taught England to look elsewhere than to Rome for the rule of right and wrong; and when Henry had secured the opinion of almost all the Universities abroad and at home,

and of many learned men, in his favour, at least so far as the illegality of the first marriage was concerned, he took the law in his own hands, married Anna Boleyn, and set the Pope at *A.D.* 1532. defiance.

Cranmer, against his will, (for he was not an ambitious man,) was exalted to the primacy on the death of Archbishop Wareham. His advice and the Queen's influence helped to estrange Henry from his leaning towards Popery; but political causes, the hasty and adverse decision of the Pope to please the emperor, added to the love of power, had more effect than argument. The right of the Pope's jurisdiction in this country was debated. It was argued that, as with all other bishops, his authority was limited to his own diocese, and the King was declared supreme head of the Church. On this point it is necessary to repeat the 37th article of our Church, afterwards agreed upon, for the title has given scarcely less offence in modern times than in the days of Henry or of Elizabeth. "The Queen's Majesty hath the chief power in this realm of England, and other her dominions, unto whom the chief government of all estates of this realm, whether they be ecclesiastical or civil, in all cases doth appertain, and is not nor ought to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction. Where we attribute to the Queen's Majesty the chief government,

by which titles we understand the minds of some slanderous folk to be offended, we give not to our princes the ministering either of God's Word, or of his sacraments; but that only prerogative which we see to have been given to all godly princes in Holy Scripture by God himself; that is, that they should rule all states and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil-doers."—We are sorry to record that the first use made of its authority in protesting England was exhibited in the exercise of a persecuting spirit, and that too against men who were conspicuous for their sincerity, piety, and learning, however mistaken

A.D. 1535. upon the subject in dispute. Sir Thomas More, the first layman who was Lord High Chancellor of England, was a man of singularly splendid talents, amiable disposition, and unblemished reputation, and it is an indelible stain upon the memory of Henry that so faithful a servant was allowed to suffer by the hands of an executioner, because he could not distinguish between the king's resistance to the usurpation of a foreign power and his own supposed assumption of spiritual rule. Fisher, bishop of Rochester, was the other victim, and, notwithstanding his mistaken views, we cannot fail to respect a man who is supposed to have influenced the celebrated

Lady Margaret, the Countess of Richmond, mother of Henry VII., in her endowments of colleges and of the University professorships which still bear her name; and who is reported to have refused to exchange his small bishopric of Rochester for more valuable preferment, with the memorable answer, that he would not desert his first wife because she was poor.

We thus perceive the Church of England once more, by the providence of God, a distinct body effectually separated from Rome; but the supremacy of Henry seemed, for a time at least, to promise little advantage to the interests of true religion and the Church of Christ. The cause of the Reformation derived at this time powerful support from the co-operation of Cromwell with Cranmer and the King; but the means adopted, and in which he took an active part, are of a very questionable character.

Cromwell was ambitious, bold, and unscrupulous in arriving at his ends, but, at the same time, generous and compassionate; and, as he proved at the degradation of Wolsey, his early patron, of singular fidelity and gratitude.

The oath of the King's supremacy having been refused by the Franciscan friars, though taken by the bishops and the universities, furnished Henry with a welcome excuse for plundering the monasteries. Cromwell was appointed Vicar-General

over a visitation of those wealthy bodies, and Cranmer was eager for their dissolution, as forming the chief bulwarks of the Church of Rome.

Many abuses, doubtless, were discovered, and Parliament, under the plea of checking laxity of morals, dissolved all the smaller monasteries, and transferred the property into the Royal coffers. Extravagance, however, presently dissipated this ill-gotten wealth, and it was soon apparent that the same avarice which had swallowed up the weaker bodies was only restrained from destroying the stronger by the want of power. However plausible the pretence, it is manifestly a dangerous step to divert property from the original intention of a donor, for it infringes on a principle that ought to be held sacred, (the disposition by will,) and it weakens the security of every other tenure. An excuse for a second visitation was soon discovered, and more religious houses were suppressed.

The persecution and death of the Queen Anna was a great discouragement to the Reformers; but other circumstances were helping the cause forward. The Church was now divided into two parties, of whom the one argued strongly in favour of rejecting the five Romish sacraments, and the other of retaining them; one archbishop and six bishops were ranged on either side, and after a lengthened discussion, certain articles were agreed

upon and published by Royal authority, which look like a compromise of opinions between the two parties, rather than the entire sentiments of either. It is obvious that at this time the doctrines of the Reformation had not made any great progress, but the true principle which led to the result was fully acknowledged. The Bible was laid down as the basis of faith. Moreover, Thomas Cromwell, now Lord Vicegerent, encouraged the clergy to preach to their flocks faithfully; to set up in their churches Latin and English Bibles, and to instruct the children in the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments in the mother tongue. The great Bible of Cranmer also was proceeding; and its publication, with his famous preface encouraging men to read it for themselves, must have greatly tended to the dissemination of truth. Add to this the gradual weaning of men's minds from superstition, by the exposure of religious frauds and of immoral practices in the monasteries, that were now suppressed, and we can clearly understand that the tide had set in favour of the Reformation.

But lo! another check!—the Romish bishops, and particularly Gardiner, of Winchester, contrived to enlist the king upon their side in a question that was now keenly debated—transubstantiation. He had already written against Luther's view of consubstantiation; and looking at this work

complacently, his vanity was flattered by the supposed strength of his arguments, and he declared himself against the Sacramentaries, i. e. those who denied the corporeal presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Cranmer's opinions on the subject were then not fixed, and he complied; but Latimer and Shaxton, of Worcester and Salisbury, esteeming the doctrine contrary to the Word of God, conscientiously resigned their sees. The death of the Queen Jane Seymour, the marriage with Anne of Cleves, and the fall of Sir Thomas Cromwell, quickly succeeded one another; nor was there any delay in dissolving Anne's marriage, and in forming another royal alliance with Catherine Howard.

This event gave additional power to the Papal cause, as the queen was niece to the Duke of Norfolk, the chief patron of that party; but upon her degradation, the king married Catherine Parr, who was a secret friend of the new doctrines. In 1544, a *Litany* was published in England, which corresponds with our present one in almost every particular, except that the invocation of saints and angels was still retained, and there was a petition against the tyranny of the Pope. Thus, with supremacy refused to his Holiness, the monasteries crushed, the notion of purgatory repudiated, — the machinery of Popery in this country was broken up; and with the free use of

the Bible, the truth of the three Creeds admitted, the children instructed in the elements of Christianity, and a form of prayer in the vulgar tongue given to the people,—the Reformation had made important progress, when the death of Henry VIII. happened, and a new era in the history of the Church commenced. On the character of Henry no farther remarks would now be proper than are calculated to show how suitable an instrument he was in the hands of Providence, to advance the work God had in view; so that, although he knew not what he was doing, and his free-will was in no way interfered with, it might be said of him, as had been said of Pharaoh, “For this cause have I raised thee up.” His *Exod. ix.* learning and his taste led him into the con-^{16.}troversy on religious subjects; his vanity made him desirous of victory, and his imperiousness would not brook control; his love of power threw off the yoke of Rome; his anxiety for the divorce brought him into an acquaintance with Cranmer his covetousness and want of conscience made him willing to abolish the monasteries; and his profusion dispersed among individuals wealth which was being grossly misapplied, and which if retained by the crown would, by rendering it independent, have risked the liberty of the subject.

But the reign of Edward VI. affords a far more pleasing illustration than was derived from that

of Henry VIII. of the passage just now quoted.

Rom. ix. 17. "For this purpose have I raised thee up," may, doubtless, be applied to both, for each was instrumental to a good end; but the conduct of one would lead us to fear that though in his authoritative character he preached to others, he was not himself influenced by true religion, while the piety of the other induces us to hope and to believe that he was called of God to a holy calling, and, being graciously moved by his good Spirit, was really a worker together with God, in endeavouring to uphold the honour of his name, and to advance the glory of His Church. The council to whose charge the young Edward was committed,—or rather, the spirit of that council, the Duke of Somerset, Lord Protector, was favourable to the views of Cranmer; the clergy were exhorted to preach and to read publicly the Word of God; and, to supply the deficiencies of an unlearned clergy, the first book of homilies was prepared. The severe laws against the Lollards, with that of the Six Articles, were revoked; the holy communion was administered in both kinds to the people, and private masses were disallowed; images were removed by special directions, at the same time that unauthorized interference for their removal was censured. Ridley, who had dissented from Romanism, coincided with Cranmer in the correction of the doctrine of transub-

stantiation, and the sacrifice of the mass; and private auricular confession was made optional: but when the people saw the evils to which the abuse of power thus committed to the priests had led, their practice soon ran into the opposite extreme. Scripture, indeed, does not absolutely declare confession to a priest to be necessary, but reason as well as revelation points out that the confession of our sins to one vested with spiritual authority, must naturally tend to induce humility, and to restrain from the repetition of similar transgressions. Again, wherever the congregation has been scandalized by our offences, a public avowal of repentance must soothe the irritation of offended society, and could scarcely be supposed displeasing in the sight of God. With these views, the Anglican Church evidently coincided, as may be seen by the service of Ash-Wednesday:—but we are in a sadly low state of discipline; and for individuals to attempt a revival, would look like affectation or hypocrisy, if they avoided the charge of Romanism.

The events which principally attract the notice of the friends of the Reformed Church at this period are two, viz. the endowment of certain charitable institutions, and the revision of the English Liturgy.

Among the difficulties with which the Reformation had to contend were the gross ignorance of

See *Job*
xxxiii. 23.
James
v. 16.

the people, and the loss of eleemosynary help which the poor experienced. The appeal to Scripture was almost nugatory when the lower classes could not read, and when books were still scarce among the higher orders; and the suppression of the great ecclesiastical establishments deprived many humble tenants of indulgent landlords and resident benefactors; for, generally speaking, their charities had not passed with their possessions to the lay usurpers. No system of parochial relief was at hand to supply the deficiency; but at the suggestion of Bishop Ridley a partial remedy at least for both these evils was prepared.

Taking advantage of an opportunity when preaching before the king, this estimable prelate urged the duty which devolves upon a monarch to provide for the instruction of the young, for the reformation of the wicked, and for the care of the sick poor placed beneath his rule. The seed was sown in a soil prepared for its reception. The amiable youth acknowledged the obligation, and immediately consulted with Ridley upon the best means of carrying into effect the principles he had inculcated. The results remain to this day monuments of his piety and wisdom, and under the divine blessing have been extensively useful to the ends for which they were respectively designed. They are to be seen in London in the hospital named after Saint Bartholomew, in the institution

for the correction of the profligate, known as Bridewell, and in the valuable school, commonly called Christ's Hospital, originally designed for the education of orphans.

But the circumstance which more completely characterizes the short reign of Edward is the revision of the English Liturgy. No sooner had the young prince succeeded to the throne of his ancestors than his council determined upon this important work, with the view of weeding out of Henry the Eighth's primer (which had been published in English four years previously) all innovations upon scriptural sanction and primitive usage. The task was committed to thirteen* of the most learned and discreet men that any age has yet produced; and in the general execution of their work they exhibited the same spirit of piety and soberness, the same love for catholic truth, the same abstinence from private interpretation, which mark the compilation of the Homilies, and, indeed, all the writings of the Anglican reformers of that day. They sought not their own glory, but the glory of their Lord: they had

* For the names of these and for many interesting particulars connected with the English Liturgy the reader is referred to Archdeacon Berens' History of the Prayer Book; Short's History of England, Appendix; Palmer's very learned book entitled *Origines Liturgicæ*; and "a tabular view of the variations" just published by the Rev. F. Bulley.

no presumptuous views of composing a new form of devotion, but gladly availing themselves of the pious thoughts and expressions of their ancestors, they retained all that was not superstitious or injurious in the ancient breviaries and missals, and particularly in that which had been used at Sarum. The foreign reformers, and among them Bucer and Peter Martyr, who were the king's professors of divinity at Cambridge and at Oxford, complained that sufficient change had not been made; and, influenced by their representations, Cranmer agreed to a new review of the Liturgy. In this, the second Liturgy of Edward, he adopted, as an introduction to the services, (which previously commenced somewhat abruptly with the Lord's Prayer,) the Sentences, Exhortation, Confession, and Absolution, used by Calvin. The change was a decided improvement, as these help to prepare the mind for the proposed devotional exercises; and as confession of unworthiness by sinful men should always precede the prayer for blessings. Would that all who attend in our churches, acknowledged this truth practically, and were careful to avail themselves of the whole service which the Anglican Church has recommended! So might they better hope to profit by the gradual progress of the worship in which they are called upon to join, than when they come into the sanctuary late, and hurried, and altogether un-

prepared for those higher acts of devotion, which consist of prayer and praise.

Other alterations in the second Prayer-book are not so worthy of applause. A jealousy of every thing which Rome had sanctioned rejected, both from the prayers and from the rubric, words and phrases that were unobjectionable in themselves, and truly ancient and catholic in their adoption. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was in danger of being degraded into a mere commemorative rite; and, through dread of the idea that the priest was offering a sacrifice, the word Altar was carefully expunged, and Table, or Holy Table, substituted for it.

But, notwithstanding partial deficiencies in both of these editions, each was a noble and pious work; and the latter is substantially the same with the form now daily used, except as to the solemn words spoken by the minister at the delivery of the consecrated elements. In the succeeding reign, even in the following year, a too pliant convocation declared it to be heretical, and renounced it for the mass-book; but almost all subsequent ages, and religious opinions of every varying shade, have agreed to pay a willing tribute to its simple beauty, and intrinsic piety.

The check that was presented to the cause of the Reformation immediately upon the accession of Queen Mary, appears at first melancholy to

contemplate; but a little reflection may help the faithful Christian to discover even here the love of God and his watchful care over the best interests of his Church. Possibly we were passing the boundaries of Catholic truth, and running into Erastian liberalism. Certainly the Church was being robbed wantonly of her temporalities: the bishopric of Gloucester was entirely suppressed, the greater part of the revenues of Durham were about to be alienated; the bishopric of London was in danger; and we were going down the stream of the times too rapidly, when the Almighty called away the amiable young Edward from an earthly, to (we trust) a heavenly crown, and gave the reformers time for reflection, and chastening for their improvement.

As there had been danger in earlier times of a premature Reformation leaving the English Churchmen *Wickliffites*, so under Edward they might have become a branch of the *Zwinglian*, or *Calvinistic* Church: but now, happily, they bear no human name, they look to no human founder, they have no one reformer to set up as an idol. They are neither of Paul nor of Apollos, but of Jesus Christ, the true Corner Stone: nor have they any human maxims or theories as the basis of their system, but the Word of God which as a rock of ages will stand firm and unshaken till the end of time.

The retrograde movement towards Popery merits equally the attention of the constitutional and ecclesiastical historian.

The Lady Jane Grey had been named in Edward's will as his successor. He was probably induced to invite his fair cousin to this dangerous pre-eminence partly by attachment to her person, partly by the advice of designing counsellors, and partly by fear of his sister's devoted attachment to the cause of Rome. The young Lady herself, virtuous, talented, and unhappy, was made the innocent victim of selfish politicians, and after a brief demonstration in her favour, equally idle and unprincipled, Mary was firmly seated on the throne of England.

Then quickly were retraced the steps that had recently been taken—Gardiner was appointed Lord Chancellor, and was reinstated in his see of Winchester; five other Bishops who had been deposed were restored; Cranmer was committed to the Tower; and though Hooper, Coverdale, and others remained, thinking it not justifiable to leave their flocks, many of the inferior clergy fled. Among these was Jewel, who presently repented after signing a recantation of the "new opinions," and joined many of his brethren in the faith in Switzerland and Germany. A convocation and a parliament were found subservient. The form of common prayer was soon called abominable. The

marriage of the Clergy was again objected to; the Protestant acts of Edward were repealed; seven Bishops were deprived; and Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer were accused, and summoned to appear before their judges in Oxford.

The triumph of the Roman Catholic party thus appeared complete, but if we could look into the prison chamber where the faithful Ridley, and good old Hugh Latimer were in bonds, we should think this triumph temporary and precarious. In their prison they comforted one another with psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; and, in the pure temper of apostolic times, they prayed for an increase of knowledge, of wisdom, and of courage.

The point of their examination principally turned upon the question of the corporeal presence in the sacrament of the Lord Supper; and their testimony is of no little value to us who coincide in their opinions. While we strenuously oppose the Romish article of transubstantiation, we acknowledge with gratitude the spiritual presence of Christ, agreeably to his gracious promise in that holy ordinance. Using the words of our own Church-catechism, we believe these martyrs and ourselves to be perfectly free from popish errors, while we maintain that the "body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful, in the Lord's Supper:" but it is

plain that such views did not satisfy the Papists, for they passed a condemnatory sentence upon these unflinching advocates of orthodoxy. The marriage of the Queen with Philip of Spain delayed for a time their execution, but there was little real relaxation of the persecuting spirit.

Cardinal Pole, as the Pope's legate, arrived from Rome, and having given England absolution for her recent heresy, received her into the bosom of his Church. All laws that appeared to prejudice popery were repealed; and, when elevated to the rank of Archbishop of Canterbury, (which he declined until the office was vacated by the death of Cranmer,) Pole endeavoured to correct the manners of the clergy, and to revive a primitive, wholesome, and godly discipline. It was but for a short time that he held this appointment, for it pleased God to remove him from this world a few hours after the death of his royal mistress. We should not have been disposed to speak of Pole with any other feeling than respect if it had not been for Gloucester Ridley's testimony; but that able and conscientious divine represents him as cold, selfish, and hypocritical; masking his persecuting spirit under an affectation of gentleness, and cruelly deceiving Cranmer, while he was not only consenting to, but actually forwarding his martyrdom. "Ostentation," he says, "and a solemn hypocrisy always

led Pole to give a religious varnish to whatever he did."

Gardiner and Bonner, bishops of Winchester and London, seem to deserve little of our sympathies; and if the former had some compunctions of conscience, he soon contrived to quiet them; while the latter was low-minded and ill-bred, and when in power gave vent to those malicious feelings, which, being natural to him, were exasperated by previous slights when his opinions were not popular.

We are not, however, anxious to aggravate the guilt of the persecutors. They are gone to their account, and will be judged by Him who also shall judge us, and Who has said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." Besides, it ought to be considered that many of these persecutors, and we must hope Mary herself, acted, not from a revengeful or cruel nature, but from a mistaken sense of duty, and an undue zeal for opinions that they thought were scriptural. Many of them, doubtless, conceived, though not in the sense in which we believe their intention to have been accomplished, that they were doing God service, and effectually advancing the cause of true religion, when they condemned to the stake men of whom the world was not worthy.

Mary was certainly far more conscientious than either her father or her sister, in her use and re-

storage of church property, which they were too ready to appropriate, or to bestow upon their courtly favourites. Nevertheless, making all this allowance, it was a melancholy degree of judicial blindness, and a religion little a-kin to Christ's merciful spirit, that sadly stained this page of history with blood,—that in four short years filled the prisons, and drove hundreds into exile,—that, (besides inducing many to temporize and to recant,) burnt two hundred and seventy unoffending men, only because they were faithful unto death.

Of this noble army of martyrs there is here but little space to speak: the leader of them, in point of time, was Rogers, a divinity lecturer at St. Paul's. "Of all the Marian martyrs," says Fuller, "Mister Philpot was the best-born gentleman; Bishop Ridley the profoundest scholar; Mister Bradford the holiest and devoutest man; Archbishop Cranmer of the mildest and meekest temper; Bishop Hooper of the sternest and austere nature; Doctor Taylor had the merriest and pleasantest wit; Mister Latimer had the plainest and simplest heart. Oh! the variety of these several instruments! Oh! their joint harmony in a concert to God's glory!"

Spectators were at first astonished, but, upon reflection, were convinced that these were truly righteous men, and while the indifferent were

started into this confession, believers were confirmed in their views, and strengthened in their faith. A similar exhortation do these men, though dead, yet speak to us. They bid us to love nothing so much as the revealed truth of God, to fear nothing so much as apostasy from Him, to be ready always to give a reason for the hope that is in us, and to be assured that whether we live or die we are the Lord's. They furnish us with a noble illustration of the truth, that "faith overcometh the world," and they exhort us "not to be carried about by every wind of doctrine," but to "hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering: for He is faithful that promised."

But the cases of Ridley, Latimer, and Cranmer, demand a longer notice. About twelve months after their former examination, these three learned dignitaries of the Reformed Church were again examined at Oxford. The fate of Cranmer was deferred, that it might be decided at Rome; but, after being insulted and catechized by their pre-determined judges, Ridley and Latimer were led forth to be burned. Each of them prepared him-

See *Ceremonies*
of the
Church.

self with a composure which a sound judgment, aided by a good conscience, could alone inspire.

The place appointed for the horrid spectacle was a ditch without the wall of Baliol college; and it is said that the spot was chosen by the bishop of Gloucester, who had been formerly its master.

The two sufferers exhibited a striking contrast in their appearance, Ridley being attired in his episcopal robe, and Latimer in his prison cloak ; the one showing what they had once been ; the other, to what they were now reduced. Next to the prospect of the glorious reward which awaited them hereafter, their greatest consolation was, that they should not die in vain ; that they should “light such a candle, by God’s grace, in England, as should never be put out.” The consolation was not groundless, and the prediction has been amply verified ; posterity has derived from their example those pure and charitable feelings which they so conspicuously displayed ; and it is only just to add, that their devotion to the cause of God, and their contempt of all sublunary considerations, effected even in some of the spectators an entire change of opinion.

The death of Ridley and Latimer was quickly followed by that of Gardiner—so quickly followed, that the two events have been thought to be connected by a special interposition of Providence. The character of this bishop of Winchester is thus given by Fox :—“Toward his superiors, flattering and fair spoken ; to his inferiors, fierce ; against his equals, stout and envious ; neither true Protestant nor right Papist ; neither constant in his error, nor yet stedfast in the truth ; neither a friend to the Pope, nor yet a perfect

enemy to Christ; false in King Henry's time, a dissenter in King Edward's, double-perjured and a murderer in Queen Mary's." Some of his last words are reported to have been, "I have sinned with Peter, but I have not wept with Peter;" and certain it is that no man left a name more deservedly odious in English history.

After a short interval Cranmer was once more summoned before the Commissioners, and was publicly degraded. The sophistry of the Jesuits endeavored to explain away his difficulties; an unexpected show of kindness threw him off his guard; and a natural fear of human suffering won the victory over him, and he signed a recantation. Nor was this all: the advantage thus obtained was actively followed up. In proportion to the chances of escape the love of life increased, and as he showed facility in yielding, greater demands were made. Not only *one* but *six* confessions of error were successively drawn from him: each of which was more complete than the preceding, and the last as full as his enemies desired.

Nor even these however could avert his fate. The implacable resentment of the Queen on account of the part he had taken in procuring her mother's divorce, and the malice of the envious Bonner were bent on his destruction; but never did malice and envy more signally confound themselves.

At the very moment when he was expected to read his recantation, and a large concourse was assembled in the church for the purpose of witnessing his shame; he substituted for it a manly confession of the true faith, to the astonishment of all present, and to the utter indignation of his papist enemies. On reaching the fire he was serene and inflexible, and, maintaining that fortitude which he had just resumed, he closed his life with an action of which even Voltaire has spoken as unparalleled in the records of magnanimity. Stretching forth his right hand into the fire he never moved it, save once that he passed it across his face, till it was entirely consumed, and before the fire had reached his body it was reduced to ashes. "That unworthy hand!" was the frequent ejaculation which during his agony burst from his parched lips.

Although for his own sake, and for the slight in consequence cast on his good name, and for the transient cloud that thus obscured the brightness of the English Reformation, we must bitterly bewail his fall; yet, as in the somewhat similar cases already noticed of Wiclif, Jerome, and Sautre, we pity more than we condemn, and deduce our own salutary lesson. By the example of Cranmer, we are taught the nothingness of man's power to resist temptation when he lets go the anchor of his faith; and in the same man we

see the grace of God perfected in weakness, and restoring him to firmness and to resignation. Hence if we be wise, we shall discipline our own hearts, and pray to One that is mightier than the powers against which we wrestle, for grace and help in time of need, for pardon and for strength.

His condemnation to the flames at least must be viewed as happy in its results; for whilst it brought him back to that condition of a Christian man from which by transgression he had fallen, it exhibited in its true light the vindictive temper and inexorable cruelty which characterized the counsellors of Mary.

It need be no matter of surprise that his conduct has been very differently represented. We marvel not that the world hated him. He was too able and too successful an opponent of the Romish errors to pass through the world without obloquy. A more perfect character would have been equally odious to the Papist if his name were as intimately connected with the Reformation, and weakness is easily magnified into wickedness, if, by impugning the individual, the cause with which he is identified appears to suffer. We at least in England are deeply indebted to Archbishop Cranmer for helping so effectually to shake off the galling tyranny of the Pope, for maintaining the Holy Scriptures to be the only standard of Divine truth, for publishing a translation of that

precious Volume in a tongue understood of the people, for the compilation of our Articles, our Book of Homilies, and much of our Common Prayer.

LECTURE XII.

The Progress of the Reformation under Elizabeth, with some notice of her Policy and of the Difficulties occasioned by Protestant Non-conformists.

IT has been already noticed that many who had embraced the views of Cranmer had sought in flight that liberty of opinion which they could not enjoy at home. In France, in Germany, and at Geneva, they found a kind asylum, and foreign and English reformers met together to compare Scripture with Scripture, and to confirm one another in the faith as it is in Jesus; but, unhappily, they forgot the many ties that should have held them in one band as members of one body; that they were brethren in misfortunes as well as in faith, and that their peculiar religion emphatically taught that other gifts profited little without charity. The Genevan discipline, in its holy abomination of idle mummeries and useless ceremonies, had run into the extreme of simplicity, and absence of ornament, and the adoption of such views by some of the English divines had disturbed the peace of the exiles at Frankfort.

This difference became of more importance when, on the commencement of a new reign, the Reformers were permitted to return; for the coat without seam had now been rent, and up to this hour no human skill has been able effectually to repair the schism.

The accession of the illustrious Queen Elizabeth was followed by the restoration of the Church to its former state, or, rather, by the reintroduction of Protestant principles, chastened by piety and moderated by charity; so that the ritual of Edward VI. and the articles which he had confirmed were once more sanctioned by the law of the land, after they had undergone a careful and praiseworthy revision.

One of the first steps was to restore the book of Common Prayer, and about its introduction a difference of opinion had arisen. John Knox had objected to the form of service adopted by King Edward; but Jewel and Cox were not influenced by his sentiments on the subject, and Ridley passed upon him this somewhat equivocal sentence, amounting almost to animadversion: "I know him to be a man of much good learning, and of an earnest zeal; the Lord grant him to use them to His glory." In revising the form of prayer which Elizabeth sanctioned, her ministers and divines prudently weighed all conscientious scruples that had been offered, and made such concessions

as they thought would gratify the Genevan and Frankfort clergy without compromising any principle, or running into the contrary extreme to that from which they had protested. It has been since acknowledged by all moderate men, that wisdom has rarely been more clearly exhibited, than in the middle course which was then laid down by the Church of England. Our Reformers were conscious that they trod on holy ground, and they went to their work reverently and discreetly; though eager to abolish human additions, they were careful not to injure the fabric on which they had been placed; and, while zealous to protest against Romanism, they affectionately revered the Church Catholic. But theirs was no easy task; the question was no longer, "Was the Reformation necessary?"—this was settled by the increased knowledge of the Scriptures, by the malice of the persecutors, by the death of the martyrs, by the apologies of the reformers, by the vigorous policy of Elizabeth, by the awakened intelligence of her subjects, and above all by the grace of God, which influenced the hearts of men: but another had succeeded it, "Where shall the Reformation stop?"—and there was some reason for alarm, lest, by doing too much, they should be as far from the truth on the one side as they had formerly been on the other; the minds of men were in a state of ferment, the

exercise of private judgment ran into licentiousness, and they required some vent for the escape of over-excited feelings. The prelate, whose learning and talents principally availed to reform the morals of the clergy and to regulate the machinery of the Church as established in these realms, (though illness prevented his attending the Committee appointed to revise the Liturgy,) was Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Strype's Parker*, i. 8. the successor of Cardinal Pole; and his name deserves especial mention, because, as Mr. Hallam *Const. His.* i. 159. says, "He was by far the most prudent Churchman of the time," and because his consecration has been accused of informality.

There was considerable difficulty in finding bishops who were willing to officiate in the consecration of men of whose opinions they did not approve; but the Providence of God had preserved abroad some of the members of the episcopal order, who thus continued in the Church the apostolical succession of bishops. The ceremony was at length performed, 17th December, 1557, in the chapel at Lambeth, by Scory, formerly Bishop of Chichester, now elected to the see of Hereford; Barlow, formerly of Wells, now Bishop elect of Chichester; Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter; and Hodgkins, suffragan of Bedford. Strype, the annalist, has been more than usually particular in commemorating all the details, in order to refute

the fable of the Nag's Head consecration, which was promulgated by the Roman Catholics about forty years after the event had taken place. The story is, that the bishops elect met at a tavern known by the sign of the Nag's Head, and that, when Oglethorpe refused to consecrate them, Scory laid a Bible on each of their heads, and bade them rise up, bishops. The tale has been often refuted; but, besides historical evidence, we may say that if there had been truth in such a narrative, it would not have been kept a secret by either charity or delicacy for the space of forty years; especially at a time when animosity to the Protestant cause was at its height among the Romanists, and the episcopal order was objected to by the non-conformists. It is consistent with the notice of this disputed consecration to remark that since several bishops, themselves apostolically ordained, assist and impose their hands at the consecration of each new bishop, it is almost impossible that the apostolical succession should be lost; for, even though the title of one were perchance invalidated, the succession would be doubtless preserved by the rest; and thus the transmission of authority, so far from being weakened by time, actually becomes more perfect as it proceeds, for an increased and accumulated sanction is thus conveyed at every fresh appointment. Of Archbishop Parker it must also be observed that Eng-

lishmen are indebted to him for editing a new translation of the Bible, called sometimes after his name, and sometimes the Bishop's Bible; and that from his death-bed he wrote to the Queen upon her impolitic, improvident, and unjust spoliation of the Church. For political purposes and private favouritism she alienated ecclesiastical property, to such extent, that notwithstanding the obligations which we owe, as a body, to her policy, many parochial divisions of the Church rue her interference with the provisions for their respective clergy.

In 1562, a succinct summary of doctrine was set forth in the Thirty-nine Articles of our Church, and these were again approved by convocation in 1571; they still remain entire, and are subscribed by every one admitted into the holy orders of the priesthood. Touching, as they do, upon a vast variety of subjects, it is no wonder that differences of opinion should exist about their several details; men's minds will vary in their view of almost every subject, and even draw different conclusions from the same arguments, and put different constructions upon the same phrase. Hence it is that we shall find various shades of opinions existing amongst those who can conscientiously subscribe to the same words; and, happily, while this summary is so free from dogmatism, that many not entirely agreeing on minute points, can honestly

unite in its support; it is so clear and definite on the characteristic truths of our religion, that no confusion can exist respecting the belief in the Trinity, justification by faith, sanctification by the Holy Ghost, the names and nature of the sacraments, and the errors of the Church of Rome. In thus praising the generally temperate character of this publication, and the uncompromising assertion of the truth therein contained, we distinctly refuse assent to a notion sometimes held, that they were prepared as articles of peace; purposely so ambiguous in their nature that they should do no violence to received opinions. We acknowledge that parties who sign them may interpret some of them in a different, almost in a contradictory manner from other parties, equally intelligent, sincere, and conscientious; but we attribute this to the bias of men's minds, and not to the vagueness of the expressions that have been adopted. The article that has been most debated is that which has been the least understood, and the mystery which involves it we shall perhaps vainly endeavour to decypher, until we arrive at the fulness and simplicity of faith of those who framed it. Nevertheless, the seventeenth article, while it is more suited to those who have long fed upon the Gospel, contains nothing objectionable even to babes in Christ, when taken in its plain, literal, and grammatical sense. One farther ob-

servation on this topic seems important; it has sometimes been held that our Articles plainly side with the views put forth by Calvin, and were intended to perpetuate them; but it has been shown by the late learned Archbishop Lawrence, in his Bampton Lectures, that the peculiar doctrines of Calvin were not known in England at the time these articles were framed; and therefore, that, as an historical fact this statement falls to the ground; and Whitby, Mant, and others have laboured to prove that while predestination and election are held by our Church, the five characteristic points of Calvinism, as taught by Calvinistic writers, viz.—Irrespective Reprobation, the partial extent of Christ's Redemption, the Grace of God irresistible, the restricted liberty of the Will, and the perseverance or indefectibility of the Saints, are inconsistent with our Articles, and with the Word of God.

An important event occurred in 1569, which demands attention, viz., the separation of the English Romanists from the English Church. Hitherto, the supremacy of the Pope had been denied, the errors of celibacy, of purgatory, of denial of the cup to the people, of prayer in an unknown tongue, and others, had been rejected; but no act of separation had taken place: regulations had been made by the state authorities as to the hours and the form of service; but the same ordination of ministry continued,

and no members of either laity or clergy were excluded from the Church. Many excluded themselves, some because there was no kneeling to images, and some because there was retained the sign of the cross; but no one, baptized by a Roman Catholic, was refused membership of the Reformed Church of England; many, in fact, still continued in communion; the Prayer-book was so free from anything calculated to give them just ground of offence, that the more moderate of the Romish laity for the first ten years of Elizabeth came frequently to church, and received the Lord's Supper; and, it is both interesting and instructive to observe that the act of separation proceeded from the Romanists, and not from the Reformers. To some this may seem trifling; but it will be found important in our argument with dissenters on the sin of schism, because it relieves us from that shadow of the offence which they are anxious to throw over us, in justification of their later conduct; it was a bull issued by Pius V., excommunicating the Queen and her supporters, and bestowing her dominions on the King of Spain, that caused the separation. Hitherto, the Romanists had entertained some hope of a change in the religious opinions of Elizabeth; but now that she had manifestly shown 'whom she had chosen,' and had given proofs that she inherited not the wavering disposition of her royal father, they refused compliance and became dissenters in

this country. It may be seasonably added that, with the exception of about six years, when a titular bishop, sent by the Pope, resided in England, the Romanists here had no bishops from that time till 1685, i. e. for one hundred and fifteen years.

The same date which witnessed the secession of *A.D.* 1570. the Romanist was also the commencement of the Puritan separation. As already noticed, the origin of this sect, which ultimately acquired power to overthrow for a time episcopacy and the throne, may be traced to the exiles in the reign of Mary, who had imbibed abroad a taste for the peculiar doctrines and discipline of Calvin, Zuinglius, and Bullenger, and who, on their return, desired to reform the Church of England according to those models. So far as their influence was suffered to extend, they, doubtless, benefited the true cause of the Reformation, by eradicating all that really savoured of popery; but in their wild alarm at vestments, and at episcopacy, and in the bitterness of their agitation against the Church, as if still infected by popery and superstition, they seem to have forgotten the arguments of reason and the principles of Christian charity. The vestments of the clergy formed the first fruitful source of disagreement. Looking on such matters as comparatively indifferent, we should be content that they were subject to the legal institutions of the coun-

try, and we might argue in favour of the law of the land sanctioning such a dress as the priests wore, from the ancient usage of peculiar robes for the ministers of every religion; from the prescribed practice in the Jewish and the ancient Christian Church; from the feelings of respect that they preserve; and from the decent distinction they maintain between those who are, and those who are not, at the time serving at the altar. But if the law happened to coincide with all these arguments or prejudices, whichever they may be, we can imagine no difficulty in complying with it; nevertheless, from tenderness of conscience, and from deeply rooted associations in men's minds between the surplice and the popery, some preferred to be deprived rather than conform; and thus unhappily they set an example which objectors in succeeding ages, in maintenance of their private opinions, have not been slow to follow. It were well if the non-conformist of modern times were sometimes to reflect how much of liberty he owes to that Church, whose establishment he decries, (for where popery reigns, not to conform is heresy,) and to be more tender to her who treats him tenderly. It is too much to expect that we should sacrifice points of distinction which we deem important, because he calls them trifling; and, be it remarked, if we were to yield all that from various quarters may be asked for, we should

have no distinctive marks of a true Church left, but should be fused in the common mass of society at large; while it seems no more than reasonable to demand of them who call the differences trifling, to be ready to concede their views, and, by relinquishing even the justice of the cause if necessary, to give some proof of affection, like the true mother in the judgment-hall of Solomon, rather than suffer the object of their professed affections to be torn asunder in the struggle.

From this period the true Church was forced to assume a somewhat different attitude, as it was attacked upon the other side, and by a different enemy. While contending against popery, it was called on to condemn the extravagant introduction of idle ceremonies, the teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, the unwarrantable assumption of divine power by fallible creatures, and the insolent exercise of authority on the part of the priesthood and the Pope; but when this enemy was overthrown, another was called into existence by the restless activity of the human mind, or by the suggestions of an evil spirit, who maliciously desires to corrupt the fair and noble works of God.

In arguing with this new opponent, it was not necessary to say a word against superstitious abuses, or undue ecclesiastical authority; but it *was* necessary to defend the truth from being

destroyed at the same time with its corruptions, so to prune off the wild shoots and too luxuriant foliage, as not to injure the sap, or kill the tree itself. For both engagements, however, Churchmen prepared themselves from the same armoury; they took first that powerful weapon which God himself had put into their hands, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; and, next, as a powerful auxiliary to explain the Scriptures, the practice of antiquity and the voice of the Church. When both parties claim Scripture as on their side, and each warmly contends for his own interpretation, there is no fairer principle of reference than that which, in the fifth century, one Vincentius Lirinensis had laid down. "In the Catholic Church," says he, "we must especially take care to hold that which has been believed at all times, in all places, and by all men; in the Latin words, 'quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est:' before this test of universality, antiquity, and agreement, the Romanist and the Protestant dissenter must alike be convicted. The glance which has been already taken in these hasty Lectures has been sufficient to inform us that the worship of images was not *always* received even by the Romish Church, and that transubstantiation is but a *novel* doctrine, and *that* only *partially* admitted; while an objection against episcopacy, the existence of a visible church, the vitality of the

sacraments, the scriptural authority of the ministry, was not dreamed of by men professing Christianity for fifteen hundred years. It very curiously happens that the only weighty arguments which the Romanist attempts to charge against us, do not, in reality, apply to the Reformed Church ; but they overthrow completely that system of independence which would frame creeds and ordain ministers at its own discretion. And, again, the accusations, which Non-conformists bring against us as favouring idolatry, priestcraft, or the unfair use of tradition, pass by without affecting *us*, while they light upon the adherents of popery with terrible and resistless force. Even the disunion that exists within the Church of England, though for many reasons much to be lamented, and artfully used by the Romanists as a sign that we are not a branch of the true Church, does not in reality prove any such thing ; but rather furnishes an additional argument against the Roman Catholic : because it shows, that, besides our own forces enrolled against them, there are others, who differ from them even more extremely than we desire to do ; who not only confirm our views so far as we agree, but even, where we differ, hold Romish tenets in greater abhorrence than our own.

In consequence of an act passed early in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, confirming the episcopal consecrations that had hitherto taken place,

(and which interference was necessary to protect property, and to settle jurisdiction otherwise disputed,) the Romanists were pleased to call those bishops parliamentary in the same spirit as the Church of England has since been called a Parliamentary Church, because, in temporal matters, she does not stand upon her rights independently of the Government of the country. The remark which the acute Fuller makes upon this charge will be read with interest. "As well," says he, "might the jesuits term Shemaiah and Nethaniah, prerogative Levites, because sent by Jehoshaphat to preach the word to the people of the land. For that good king did not give, but quicken and encourage their commission to teach; as here the Parliament did only publish, notify, and declare the legal authority of the English bishops, whose call and consecration to their place was formerly performed, derived from apostolical, or at least from ecclesiastical institution."

2 Chron.
xvii. 8.

However mistaken in their views, and occasionally violent in their opposition, though misled by the love of popularity, or by the vanity of suffering in what they believed to be a righteous cause, these early Non-conformists were evidently influenced by conscientious scruples, and gave proof of their sincerity by the sacrifices that they made. Rather than subscribe to the detested act of uniformity, some declined preferments, and

others gave up their livings. Miles Coverdale, the former Bishop of Exeter, was one of these, and while he declined to re-enter upon his episcopal see from antipathy to the vestments, it was a special favour on the part of the government that allowed him to retain his small rectory of Saint Magnus, London Bridge.

Fox, the well known martyrologist, was another of these men, and he is recorded to have answered to an application for *subscription*, by producing a Greek Testament, and saying, 'to this I will subscribe.'

It must also be borne in mind, when canvassing the conduct of those who began to preach in conventicles, that they did so because churches were denied them. They had themselves been properly ordained, and conscientiously felt that there was woe to them if they did not preach the gospel; but being irritated that they were pressed so closely by the eagerness of Elizabeth, and being interdicted from their former pulpits, it is not surprising that a variety of arguments induced them to labour systematically among those who were willing to accept their ministerial services.

Certain it is, that the seed sown by Bishop Hooper about vestures, in the time of Henry VIII., gradually ripened into objections against other discipline, into disregard of the appointed

forms of worship, and into positive hatred of all who adopted what they called "idolatrous gear." And thus, although the martyred prelate and his earliest admirers would have been satisfied with "vestural relief," it soon appeared that not any concession short of unconditional surrender would long satisfy the objectors. So ready were they to find occasions for dissent, that the sign of the cross in baptism, and the sound of an organ during divine service, were thought sufficient reasons for leaving the church and repairing to the meeting-house; for they considered not that in so doing they diminished the glory of their religion and destroyed the unity of the visible church of Christ.

Connected with disciplinarian objections, it is proper to record the first meeting of the English Presbyterians at Wandsworth. A few of the non-conforming clergy and several laymen there formed themselves into a society in 1572, and agreed upon a record of their sentiments, known as the order of Wandsworth. Their meetings were at first clandestine; but from the increase of their numbers it was impossible for them long to assemble in secret, and the circumstance of dissent having assumed this tangible shape induced the government to act with more promptness and decision against such as objected to conform.

The principal author of the rigorous measures

was Elizabeth; for her imperious nature could little brook opposition to her commands, and she is represented as blaming Archbishop Parker for his delay and leniency in the matter of forcing the London clergy to submit. Archbishop Parker's suc- *A.D. 1575.* cessor, Grindal, notoriously fell under the Queen's displeasure on the same account, or, rather, on account of his greater unwillingness to force the consciences of weaker brethren. His disgrace was one of the mistakes of Elizabeth; for his sincerity and his independence are fully vouched for by his offer to resign the primacy, and by his honest protest against her Highness's self-willed alterations. Church matters, he ventured to tell her, were to be settled according to the will of God, not her own.

In Whitgift, his talented successor, she found *A.D. 1583.* an Archbishop more agreeable to her temper. Generally sagacious in her choice of counselors, she discovered in him superior abilities, extensive learning, a strong sense of the value of episcopacy, a great love of uniformity, and sufficient sternness of material to press those who refused compliance. His arguments with Cartwright, an able advocate of the Puritans, had helped to bring him into notice: the contest was a sharp one, and the victory has been claimed for each by the respective partizans. Fuller gives the palm to the Archbishop, because he was armed

with power; but Neale, the Puritan, and author of the *History of the Puritans*, demurs, for this somewhat strange reason, that Cartwright had the last word. Other causes have been assigned for Cartwright's "Second Reply" not being answered. Whitaker, in a letter to Whitgift, characterized it as "loose and puerile—rather an abuse of words than an array of matter." In Cartwright's later days, when the fire of his temper was subdued, he acknowledged his regret for the troubles he had caused, and confessed that "he had received so much kindness from the Archbishop that he was bound to most humble duty, so much the straiter, because his Grace's favour proceeded from a frank disposition, without any desert of his own." Soames, moreover, in his last work of research, "*Elizabethan Religious History*," declares that "his old antagonist Whitgift lived latterly upon terms of friendly intercourse with him."

The government, however, that enforced conformity by pains and penalties in a matter so comparatively indifferent, cannot, any more than the Puritans who resisted it, be well justified by sound principles of Christian charity. But when controversy had once begun, concession was not easy. Elizabeth saw the wisdom and necessity for uniformity, and resolved, rather than waive the point, upon maintaining it by the strong arm of power; while the separatists magnified the

importance of the questions at issue, and occasionally braved persecution.

The severity of Whitgift, though perhaps under circumstances to be extenuated, and certainly proceeding from a desire to advance the cause of truth and peace, not from any love of tyranny or bloodshed, produced farther alienation; and the cause of the Puritans somewhat prospered from a suspicion that Elizabeth favoured the papists. We can now understand that her high-state principles led to that mistake, and that there was no real ground for such a charge. But her love of show and ceremony in the services, and her difference of treatment towards the Papists and the Puritans fostered this suspicion. The case seems to have been that Elizabeth, with her sagacious mind, saw at a glance that Popery in this country was overthrown, and that Nonconformity was the enemy with which she would have to contend. Again, it appears that she treated the Roman Catholics as differing from conscience, and therefore she was not disposed to press them on points of faith, where some of the wisest and best of men had differed. But the Puritans she considered to be acting from a factious spirit, refusing compliance on a point of mere indifference, and acting throughout in a spirit of insubordination that her haughty and Tudor spirit could not brook. Accordingly, the Roman Catholics she treated gene-

rally as a vanquished foe, with some magnanimity and generosity; but Puritanism she endeavoured, according to her threat, and with much violence of temper, to root out of the land. At this distance of time we lament that greater kindness was not shown to that body of men; for we cannot doubt their sincere love of religion, nor their hearty hatred of popery; and we think that a narrowness of mind was too severely visited by privations, imprisonments, Star Chamber warrants, and judgments of ecclesiastical commissioners; but the latter conduct of this sect, though partly to be attributed to their persecution, seems to argue that Elizabeth was right. In reference to them, one wrote to Burleigh, "The course they run is tending, for aught I can perceive, to the ruin of our country, overthrow of our monarchy, destruction of our nobility, and to bring England into perpetual bondage to the Spaniards. They neither, as it seems, respect religion, though they make it their cloak, their native soil, nor anything else, but their own ambitious humour, persuaded by this means to attain to special authority and government under the King of Spain." For the warmth of these observations, as describing the whole section, though doubtless they were true of many, some allowance must be made for party spirit.

Notwithstanding the Queen's supposed leniency to Roman Catholics, it appears, from Milner's

calculation, that in this reign two hundred and four holding those opinions suffered death, ninety died in prison, and two hundred and five were banished; but then we must remember that not a difference of creed, but open acts of rebellion, and suspected acts of treason condemned them to the stake.

The slightest glance at the sufferers of this period, presents to our mind's eye the interesting form of Mary, Queen of Scots, baring her fair neck for the axe of the faltering executioner. Now it were unnecessary to argue the merits of this case, or to endeavour to erase the blot from Elizabeth's escutcheon. As a Queen of another country, Mary's sentence was illegal, except upon the ground that she had consented to the appointment of her judges; but it was still a question how far she was enabled to give a free consent on such a subject, and if it were extorted from her, the illegality would remain the same. However that may be, her misfortunes and hard treatment have rendered her an object of our deepest pity and compassion, although her early character may merit our reproach: and it ought to be recorded that in the guilt of her death the kingdom was as much involved as the Queen, and none were more strenuous than the Puritans to procure her execution. The opposition of this party assumed a new form towards the close of the reign, and

became doctrinal. All of Calvin's doctrines were imported, with such exaggerations as the zeal of his disciples thought would best explain his views. This made a somewhat different division of existing parties, and tended to strengthen the cause of Puritanism, for many of the bishops held Calvinistic opinions, as appears from the Lambeth Articles. These were published after a meeting of some of the bishops and clergy, in a spirit far more dogmatical, and less moderate than the Thirty-nine Articles already alluded to, but were never sanctioned by the Church of England, though they professed to explain its doctrine.

Eliz. His.
p. 467.

- Among the able men who at this juncture were raised up to be defenders of the faith, the honoured names of Jewel and of Hooker hold
- Oct. 1571. conspicuous places. Jewel, once timid and apostate, has left on record an able justification of the Reformation. He both states therein the reasons that warranted England in separating from the See of Rome, and answers calumnies that were brought against the method of her doing so. He proves the doctrinal errors of the Romanists by extracts from their authorised publications, and the immoralities encouraged by their system by clear historical evidence.
- Oct. 1600. Hooker, whose life has been most pleasingly sketched by the simple minded Isaac Walton, was as useful in vindicating the Reformed Church

against the errors of nonconformity, as his kind patron the Bishop of Salisbury had been in defending its principles against the Romanists. Having, as Master of the Temple, been led into a public controversy with one Travers, lecturer at the Temple Church, and having seen the evil of different doctrines being alternately preached from the same pulpit, (for the forenoon sermon, it is said, spake Canterbury, and the afternoon Geneva,) this learned man digested his thoughts upon the government and discipline of the Church, and published them under the name of "Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity." This laborious work has established his reputation for learning and research; and, notwithstanding some angry censure from those who do not agree with his conclusions, has obtained for him proverbially the name of "the judicious."

No one person however was really more instrumental in upholding and advancing the interests of true religion than Elizabeth herself. By her watchfulness and energy she checked or stimulated (as encouragement or restraint was necessary) the exertions of the Clergy; and, by her extensive patronage of literature, specially in sanctioning the endowment of Grammar Schools, she paved the way for a better educated ministry, and for a more contented, moral, and religious people: but to sum up our obligations in a few

words we adopt the glowing language of one of our modern orators, and with them bring this lecture to a close:—

*Croly's
Preface.*

“The cause of Elizabeth was Protestantism, and in that sign she conquered; she shivered the Spanish sword; she paralyzed the power of Rome; she gave freedom to the Dutch; she fought the battle of the French Protestants; every eye of religious suffering throughout Europe was fixed on this magnanimous woman. At home she elevated the habits and the hearts of her people, she even drained off the bitter waters of religious feud, and sowed in the vigorous soil, which they had so long made unwholesome, the seeds of every principle and institution that has since grown up into the strength of the empire; but her great work was the establishment of Protestantism. Like the Jewish King, she found the ark of God without a shelter, and she built for it the noblest temple in the world, she consecrated her country
A.D. 1603. into its temple. She died in the fulness of years and honour; in the memory of England her name and her reign are alike immortal.”

LECTURE XIII.

James I. and the Presbyterians in Scotland: Charles I. and the Puritans in England.

IN the details of the English Reformation we have seen, first, the passions of Henry VIII. subserving the providence of God, in estranging the country from the influence of foreign interference and Romish superstition; next, the piety of young Edward and his counsellors advancing a gradual reformation on doctrinal points; and then, after the check on the part of Mary, the wisdom of Elizabeth perfecting and maturing the designs of her royal brother. The gradual increase of knowledge, and the lessons taught by various interruptions, and the time which had been given for reflection, not only declared changes to be necessary, but enabled them to be made beneficially. When one portion of the people, discontented with the progress of the work, attempted to go farther than sound discretion justified, many of the clergy and nobility agreed with the Queen that it was time to pause. Happily a love of

uniformity still characterized the nation, and the prerogatives of the crown were uninvaded: some from a love of peace, others from a spirit of loyalty, and a third section from their conscientious views of the constitution and authority of the Church, combined to maintain in England an episcopal form of government.

In Scotland, however, the case was very different. Not having been gradually prepared for the change by previous debates on the supremacy of the Pope and the power of the keys, and comparatively uninstructed in the history of the Church, episcopacy, and apostolical succession, the people of that country were suddenly and violently roused against the pretensions of popery by the exiles returned from Geneva. These, as we have seen, brought with them striking peculiarities both in doctrine and in discipline, which were by no means welcome to a court connected with the polished manners of France, accustomed to some ostentation in their worship, and either openly or covertly embracing the tenets of the Romanists. Direct opposition to the Queen of Scots gave the appearance of disaffection, if not of rebellion, to the Reformers: the Roman Catholic clergy recommended the persecution of some of the most exemplary, and martyrdom roused the spirit of the sufferers. The impetuosity

Robertson. of Knox, "who never feared the face of any man,"

stimulated their zeal for civil and religious freedom into frenzy and fanaticism. The death of Mary and the minority of James threw additional power into their hands, and they disdained all semblance of the discipline and ritual, as well as of the doctrines of the Church of Rome: hence they rejected the government of bishops, and they assumed a right even over kings and princes.

The spirit in which the Scottish reformation was conducted appears to have been less Christian as well as less catholic and apostolic, than that which had taken place in England. The sincerity, courage, and devotion of those who effected it are unquestionable; but there was a sad deficiency of that mildness which Ridley, Latimer, and Cranmer exhibited, a total neglect of the practices of primitive antiquity, and far too little attention to the doctrine which the Scriptures preached of submission to the powers that be.

The right divine of kings, which, until after this period, was scarcely questioned in England, was not only canvassed by the Scottish Presbyterians, but was declared by them to be a fallacy. They joined in the deprivation and the death of Mary, and they only tolerated James because they thought that as a minor he could be modelled according to their wishes. On attaining manhood he artfully concealed his real opinions, until his accession to the throne of England. They were,

however, plainly expressed in a work which he wrote for his son Henry, called the "Basilicon Doron," or "Royal Gift." He there stoutly maintains the 'right divine' of kings, which is not, as the satirist has said, 'to govern wrong,' but to hold the reins of government as the delegate and representative of a Higher Power. He protests equally against English Puritans and Scottish Presbyterians, for they were men of the same stamp, and actuated by similar views. He calls parity, or equality in the Church, the mother of confusion and the enemy to unity, which is the mother of order. And he urges his son not to suffer the principles of these fanatic spirits (whom he had accused of perjury and of ingratitude) "to brook his land if he likes to sit at rest: except," he adds, "you would keep them for trying your patience, as Socrates did an evil wife."

James has been accused of holding this language, and of subsequently supporting the cause of Episcopacy from interested motives; for instance, that he might conciliate the English, first to his succession, and afterwards to his government. But it is clear that he always suspected a republican spirit in the person of a Presbyterian, and conscientiously believed the doctrine which he strenuously maintained under the proverb, "No bishop, no king," viz. that if the episcopal government of the Church were destroyed, the regal

government of the people would not long continue. The succeeding reign may furnish a melancholy comment upon this opinion; but it is only due to the Scottish Presbyterians to add, that, since their system has been sanctioned by the law in their own country, they have not been less conspicuous for loyalty to those whom they have believed their rightful sovereigns than any body of men throughout the kingdom.

The decision of temporal rulers does not, however, alter the question between Episcopacy and Presbyterianism as sanctioned by apostolic practice. Legislation only affects the authority of an establishment, and the degree of respect paid to present rulers. Viewed with a reference to more modern times, the Presbyterians of Scotland are excellent men and dutiful subjects; but the Episcopalians of the same country are, besides these, most excellent Churchmen. And when out of favour, the disaffection of the Presbyterian, and the turbulent spirit of his minister, present a striking contrast to the faith and patience with which, through evil report and good report, Scottish Episcopacy has borne her cross during the night of persecution, and to the meekness and fidelity with which her clergy have discharged their duties through long years of poverty and of depression.

The cause of Presbyterianism is not without its

champions; but, looking both to history and to the Scriptures, we come to the conclusion that the system was woven out of a few partial texts of Scripture, imperfectly understood, to meet the particular circumstances of those who objected to episcopal direction; that it had been undreamed of in the Church for fifteen centuries, and in the sixteenth was a novel introduction to suit the exigencies of the German, and the preference of the Scotch reformers.

The testimony of most of the learned in that age, even of Grotius, a Presbyterian, and, it is said, of John Knox himself, before his death, was in favour of Episcopacy, as the most efficient system: and it is certain that the practice of all the earlier ages of the Christian Church not simply recognized the existence of a bishop, but made the authority of his sanction essential to the validity of holy orders and of every religious service.

One of the earliest steps of James connected with Church History, after his unresisted succession to the throne of Elizabeth, was to settle the form of Common Prayer; and, though obviously favourable to the Church of England, he expressed himself anxious to arrive at the truth by hearing all that might be advanced against it. This declaration led to the famous conference at Hampton Court, and thereby to two results highly interesting and important to all members of the English

Church. The Catechism was lengthened by the addition of that portion with which that able summary of doctrine is now concluded, viz. the explanation of the Holy Sacraments. And, the translation of the Bible having been carefully revised, the authorised version, which is now read in our churches, and happily within reach of all our countrymen, was published under the title of King James's Bible.

Very different accounts of the King's conduct at this conference have been handed down to us. Lucy Aikin speaks of him as partial and violent; but since the bias of her mind is strongly marked in almost every page, her testimony is less valuable; and a modern writer, whose judgment, fairness, and research will not be questioned, represents James as having maintained the character of a dignified and learned moderator, allowing to each party the free expression of their arguments, checking improper interruption from either side, and, upon winding up the conference, delivering his sentiments with great ability. The account here alluded to is taken from one published by Barlow, Dean of Chester, who, having aided in the discussion, was deputed to write the history of it; and, after a minute and careful comparison of the only authentic document that seems to throw any discredit on that record with those that were published by the Church party, the present Bishop

See *Short*,
p. 351.

of Sodor and Man declares himself convinced that they furnish a strong confirmation of the report which Barlow made.

The expressions then openly delivered by the King, and the renewal of former statutes against the Jesuits and others, displeased both the Presbyterians and the Roman Catholics. A few of the latter body, whose bigotry seems to have destroyed within them all sense of loyalty, and even of common humanity, associated themselves for the murder of James and of all the royal family. Under the false and wicked notion that the end would sanctify the means, they deliberately plotted for the sudden destruction of the King, his Council, and Nobles, in Parliament assembled: but the goodness of God overruled their intentions, and the anniversary of the fifth of November periodically calls for the expression of our gratitude to a merciful and ever-watchful Providence. The plot was the design of a small section, but from that time the loyalty of all the Romanists in England was suspected, and the laws against them were put in force with such activity and animosity as zeal or terror could excite.

A.D. 1623. Towards the end of the reign, however, the eagerness which the King felt for the "Spanish match" induced him to show the Roman Catholics much more favour than the majority of his subjects approved: but his good will was not

even partially conciliated for the Puritan party. Believing that they struck at the root of his own prerogatives, and at the authority of the Bishops' Courts, he always viewed them as a republican and rebellious faction, and his idea of the English Puritan, and of the Scottish Presbyterian, was that he disliked the government of the Church, and opposed that of the State.

The power of the Independents was nevertheless considerably advanced during this king's reign. His incautious expression of ill-digested opinions alienated many friends. His insincerity in making and indifference in breaking promises, added to the unjust patronage of unworthy favourites, made him many enemies. His profusion brought him into embarrassments, and those embarrassments taxed the benevolence of his subjects; so that if he procured temporary supplies, it was at the price of the confidence and affections of the British people.

Another cause for the advance of Non-conformity may perhaps be found in the new line of policy adopted by Archbishop Abbot. His predecessor Bancroft maintained the episcopal authority, and the necessity for conforming. He had followed in Whitgift's steps, and many would censure him for undue severity, but the impartial Clarendon has left this testimony in his favour:

"He understood the Church excellently, and had *Aikin*, i.
364.

almost rescued it out of the hands of the Calvinian part, and very much subdued the unruly spirit of the Non-conformist, by and after the conference at Hampton Court." "He countenanced men of learning and disposed the clergy to a more solid course of study than they had been accustomed to ; and if he had lived would quickly have extinguished all that fire in England, which had been kindled at Geneva." Wilson on the contrary calls him "a person severe enough whose roughness gained little upon those who deserted the ceremonies." Dr. Southey seems to take the same view with the author of the history of the Great Rebellion. "Bancroft," says he, "had nearly succeeded in weeding out the discontented ministers who sought to subvert the Church, in whose services they had engaged ; under Abbot's patronage, who sympathised with them as a Calvinist, they became numerous enough to form a formidable party."

Southey,
ch. xvi.

A.D. 1625. To enter upon so important a reign as that of Charles I. when so little space remains for doing justice to the subject, would appear a hopeless task, if we were not encouraged by the recollection that no portion of English History has been so carefully digested or so generally studied. The elegant historian Hume has bestowed unusual labour on this interesting reign, and wrought it to a higher polish than the rest of his elaborate work.

Miller has traced its details in a manly and vigorous style; the virtuous Clarendon has drawn the picture of these troublous times with startling truth; Ludlow has told his story as a plain and gallant soldier; Whitelocke has treated it with all the minuteness of a journal; and a domestic view may be read in the work of Col. Hutchinson; while the research of Lucy Aikin has brought to light some documents and anecdotes that well illustrate the stirring passions of the times. Besides these, Le Bas' "Life of Archbishop Laud," Jesse's "Court of England during the time of the Stuarts," and Vaughan's "Protectorate of Cromwell," form a course of pleasing and instructive study.

Since, then, the leading incidents are familiar, we have now only to trace the gradual triumph of the Puritans, and to explain how the Church and Monarchy fell together, and how the fall of each assisted in promoting the ruin of the other.

A variety of causes combined to render Charles unequal to the task of governing a people who were bent upon changes which he could not approve. The first events of his reign found him at variance with his parliament. A war, that had been rashly undertaken, and was feebly conducted, rendered supplies absolutely necessary; but these his Commons were unwilling to afford. Many Non-conformists of vigorous abilities, of undaunted

courage, and of uncompromising prejudices, had obtained seats in that assembly, and when they found their opposition to the government strengthened by the union of political with religious objections, they readily lent their aid to any step that would embarrass the king's measures.

Again, the introduction of Scottish and English soldiers into the Dutch war produced a demoralizing effect upon the loyalty of British subjects. The high principle of patriotism was degraded by the admitted practice of serving in foreign armies for the sake of pay, without reference either to the motives of duty, or to the justice of the cause. And an acquaintance with the sentiments of republicans in the Netherlands inoculated into the British auxiliaries much the same love of change as, in later times, connection with the American war infused into the French population, through the medium of the younger spirits of the soldiery.

Moreover, the hatred of Episcopacy generally, and of Archbishop Laud particularly, happening to coincide with a conscientious desire to introduce the Calvinistic theories, swelled the ranks of the malcontents; and the steps taken by the King in stretching his prerogative to its utmost limits, when supplies were refused by the Commons, enlisted in the opposition some honest friends of freedom, who feared that Charles would

not limit himself to the maintenance of the much debated theory, the right divine, but would practically prove himself a tyrant, and trample on the liberties of the people. Some colour was given to this suspicion by the severe sentences passed in the Star Chamber upon Prynne and other libellers ; though Prynne afterwards confessed, that "if the King had cut off his head, when he only cropped his ears, he had done no more than justice, and had done God and the nation good service."

Both the archbishop and his royal master were accused (but without doubt falsely) of a desire to bring back Popery. As Church principles were little understood, the due authority of bishops was confused with the superstitious tyranny of the Romish priesthood ; the legal headship of the King was thought little better than the supremacy of the Pope ; a form of prayer, the notes of the organ, the decent vestments, and the horns of the mitre, were grievous abominations to the sight of these self-styled godly men, that they "could not away with." Every action of Laud was grievously distorted, or maliciously interpreted. Though we can now admire his munificence and magnanimity, and can allow that his learning and liberality would have been an honour and a blessing to any age, he was charged by his cotemporaries with hypocrisy, ambition, and hostility to the best

interests of his country and of the reformed religion.

While, however, we admire his zeal, and give him credit for sincerity, and agree to the truth of the principles on which he acted, we must acknowledge that he was often incautious, and sometimes culpably indiscreet. Even among educated people a notion had gained ground that he was likely to apostatize. The daughter of the Earl of Devonshire, who had embraced the Romish faith, and was asked by Laud the reason for changing her religion, is said to have thus replied, "It is chiefly because I hate to travel in a crowd." The meaning of these words being demanded, she gave the following explanation:—"I perceive your Grace and many others are making haste to Rome; and therefore to prevent my being jostled, I have gone before you."

The Puritans in England were also much assisted and encouraged by a demonstration in Scotland on the part of those whose sentiments were similar to their own. A considerable body of men bound themselves by a solemn league, or covenant, to resist every innovation that they conceived likely to bring back Romanism; and these Covenanters soon took a conspicuous part in producing the changes which were now at hand. They were naturally joined by such unprincipled men as are to be found in every coun-

try, readily disposed for violent changes, in the selfish hope of gaining something in a scramble consequent upon a general confusion. Besides the crafty, there were also many timid persons, who, without meaning any harm, deserted their posts of duty, (and particularly in the House of Commons,) rather than persevere in a painful contest and offend overbearing demagogues by continued opposition: or who, from regard to their private families, desired a condition of peace and tranquillity, and, without many scruples of conscience, joined the stronger party.

Repeated success in the Parliament led to greater demands upon the patience and dignity of the Crown, and the power of the king was lessened by injudicious assemblings and by still more injudicious dissolutions. Every collision was the cause of fresh triumph to the Puritans. The unhappy Charles was too hasty in making his demands and too late in making his concessions. Although he sought little more than had been granted to James, and than had been possessed by Henry, and Elizabeth, he had fallen upon very different times: the power of the people, and of their representatives in Parliament, was considerably increased, and their spirit of resistance was no less proportionally roused.

The "Root-and-Branch men" took the lead in the Lower House, and proposed to exclude Bishops

from the House of Lords, as unfit to legislate on temporal affairs, though, with a somewhat strange yet very common inconsistency, they conceived themselves, as laymen, competent to pass laws upon ecclesiastical affairs. Among their early steps were objections to the Common Prayer, and to the Bishops, Deans, and Chapters; and attempts to remove the rails from around the Communion Table, and to level the Chancel: while, contrary to the apostolic precept, they forbade every man to bow at the name of the Lord Jesus. So soon as they obtained authority to remove the Communion Tables, zealots led the way, the holy buildings were desecrated by rude soldiers and wild fanatics, rails were violently torn up, painted windows wantonly destroyed, tombs barbarously defaced, and the loyal clergy grossly insulted. The tyranny of the mob was proved to be worse than all other tyrannies, and the High Commission Court in its worse days never so abused its power. The whole conduct indeed of the Puritans forms a severe satire upon their arguments, for they eagerly ran into those extremes of specious interpretation and tyranny over conscience, which they affected to dread in the Roman Catholics. So apparent was this, that South writes, "Puritanism indeed is only reformed Jesuitism, as Jesuitism is nothing else but Popish Puritanism; and I could draw out such an exact parallel

between them, both as to principles and practices, that it would quickly appear they are as truly brothers as ever were Romulus and Remus, and that they sucked their principles from the same wolf."

It is known that some of the Non-conformists had emigrated to Holland; and it was very long believed that among others who were forcibly detained from going thither, were Pym, Hampden, and Cromwell, (conspicuous actors in the tragedy that followed,) but Lucy Aikin, by her diligent research, has discovered papers which prove this not to have been the case. The emigrants returned when success favoured their party, and joined in the cry against the bishops, and the most violent and incendiary sermons were delivered under a sanction from the Parliament.

The apostles of rebellion gloried in their work, and persuaded themselves that they were commanded in God's name to do the acts of treason and of murder at which our nature shudders. Our venerable cathedrals were stripped of their ornamental carving; the organs were broken up and sold for the value of the materials; and the body of St. Paul's church was converted into a stable for the troopers' horses. So that literally, to adopt the eloquent language of Archdeacon Maning, with reference to a similar rebellion in another place, "They rifled the Church so far as it was endowed; they sold her chalices for

drinking cups, and watered their horses from her baptismal fonts."

Low malignity, vulgar malice, bigoted fanaticism, and inhuman tyranny, characterized their proceedings. The houses of the Roman Catholics were pillaged, and their inhabitants, however amiable and inoffending, were shamefully abused. Seven thousand clergymen were ejected because they did not, or, rather, *could* not, go the whole length of those who were called Root-and-Branch men. Among the laity the majority went much farther than they had ever dreamed of, or, if they hesitated to proceed, they were styled Recusants, Malignants, and Unfaithful, and they shared the same fate as their original opponents. No man, let it be remembered, suffered more at their hands than Sir Edward Dering, who had proposed in the House of Commons the first motion for destroying the fabric of the Church, as it was then established.

Strafford and Laud died upon the scaffold—the fore-runners of their royal master. The wild animal that has tasted blood is not satisfied till he is gorged; and the success of the Puritans emboldened them to demand the removal of the King. He had refused to give up the Church, and nothing less would satisfy its enemies. Notwithstanding the advice of his ill-judging Queen, he rested on his coronation oath, and upon his

own deliberate and well grounded conviction that Episcopacy was consistent with the form of church government handed down by the Apostles. He looked upon himself as the trustee of that pure form of worship which had been committed to his hands by Him who is the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and he died a martyr in its cause rather than betray his trust.

He is gone to his reward. Upon the conduct of the nation we forbear to dwell, for this was the saddest crime that stains the name of England. Let the curtain of our history fall, and hide the regicides from our view, while we pause upon the royal martyr's sufferings, to pay the passing tribute of a tear.

LECTURE XIV.

A survey of the Reformed Religion in France during the Sixteenth and the former half of the Seventeenth Century.

THE paramount interest which we naturally take in the history of the Church in England, has withdrawn us for a time from the history of the Church in general; and we are called upon, before we proceed with the Protectorate of Cromwell, to examine the condition of the Church of Christ upon the Continent. We have seen the German Reformation successfully effected, and the unmolested enjoyment of their privileges secured by A.D. 1515. the Diet of Augsburg.

We now return to the consideration of the Vaudois. Anxious only for peace and for freedom from persecution, the remaining inhabitants of the secluded Alpine valleys preferred obscurity to fame, and sought not to propagate their doctrines, through a well-founded apprehension that their only safety was in silence. We have seen them, indeed, falsely accused of things which they knew not, at a time when the testimony of even their

enemies acknowledges the purity of their moral principles, and the inoffensiveness of the manners of these mountaineers. We have seen them hunted like the chamois of those picturesque districts, and driven from their fastnesses upon the plea of heresy, simply for maintaining without partiality, and without hypocrisy, the doctrine which they had received from their fathers; but, like the scattering of the early Church upon the death of Stephen, the dispersion tended to the propagation of the truth.

*Smedley's
Reformed
Religion
in France,
p. 3.*

Through the passes of the Alpine valleys, a light broke in upon the plains below: and the darkness under which they were labouring having become so great that it could be felt, the dawn of truth was the more welcome. The abuses of the Romish Church were daily growing more grievous, the monopolising spirit of Rome offended the interests no less than the judgment of France; and, where the powerful voice of Luther was raised against the monstrous innovations of the Vatican, some of the French divines ventured to prolong the echo of his protests.

The change required was, however, too great *A.D. 1535.* for the spirit of the times, and Francis I. gave rise in a moment of excitement, to a proclamation, which confiscated the property, and condemned to banishment or to death, the persons of such as were called heretics. Under the name of Sacra-

mentarians, they fell again beneath the jealous enmity of a king of France, in the reign of her Second Henry. Nevertheless existing abuses were so sensibly felt, that reform was strenuously supported by men who disinterestedly recommended change, and gave a sanction to their advice by an undeniable superiority in morals; while its cause was most powerfully advocated by spiritual doctrine, and by a devoted zeal which braved stonings, and imprisonments, and deaths.

Farther persecutions under the House of Guise, during the reign of the imbecile Francis II., the short-lived husband of Mary Queen of Scots, lead us to the time when the name of Huguenots was first appropriated to this persecuted race of Christians. Various are the origins that have been suggested to account for this appellation; but all agree that the time of its first adoption was the year 1560, when the court were resident at Tours. The most plausible explanation of the name is this,—that the French Reformers principally resided in a quarter of that town, where an ancient gate had been named after one King or Count Hugo, a contemporary of Charlemagne; and the title thus bestowed in ridicule, or by accident, they willingly or proudly assumed in testimony of their loyal adherence to the line of Hugh Capet, and it was perhaps, confirmed to them by popular acclamation from their known hostility to the Carlovingian

race, who were surviving in the brothers of the House of Guise.*

The premature death of Francis saved the lives of his kinsmen, the King of Navarre and his more magnanimous brother, the Prince of Condè; and the accession of the youthful Charles IX., in the eleventh year of his age, was at first favourable to the Huguenots; but the edict of July exposed them to a renewal of espionage and persecution.

The arguments of the Reformers did at last obtain a hearing; and the talents and temper of Theodore Beza, and of Peter Martyr, were exhibited to great advantage at the conference at Poissy, in the presence of the Queen Mother, (the talented Catherine of Medicis, widow of Henry II.,) and of the Cardinal of Lorraine. The details are too long for our present purpose; but, in connection with it, it is interesting to observe that Beza was eminently successful when he opposed the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, when he explained the opinion of Reformers respecting the real presence in that holy sacrament, and when he vindicated the second commandment; while the only signs of weakness in his arguments are when he undervalues episcopal ordination and apostolical succession. The English Reformed Church has all the benefit of his arguments for the one, without the disadvantage

* For other derivations, see Smedley, i. p. 128, Note.

of his error in the other. We have both pure succession, and pure doctrine, while Roman Catholic priests want the one, and irregularly appointed Protestant preachers want the other. It ought also to be noticed that Catherine herself wrote to the Pope about this time, recommending specifically many of those changes, which the purifying influence of the Reformation has since happily effected.

Successive interruptions during divine service in the Reformed Churches, (notwithstanding the "edict of January," which, being substituted for the edict of July, had given them such permission,) and the massacre at Vassy, by the escort of the Duke of Guise, bade the Huguenots prepare for civil war; and, when the persons of the King, and the Queen Mother, were seized by the triumvirate, (the Duke of Guise, Montmorency, and the Maréchal de St. André,) the Reformers hastened to Orleans, associated together for the protection of themselves and of their religion, and appointed the Prince of Condé the leader of their party.

The zeal of the Reformers unhappily degenerated in many cases into wild fanaticism, and the rage of the Iconoclasts, or Image-breakers, wounded the feelings and roused the indignation of the Roman Catholics. In reprisal, they stabbed or drowned all whom they deemed sectaries, so that one, writing of those times, remarks, "the very

rivers were choked with their dead." The horrors of those civil wars were aggravated by the savage nature of some entrusted with authority ; and, on either side, monsters of cruelty disgraced the name of manhood, and the cause of religion in which they professed to be engaged.

It was at this season that our Queen Elizabeth *Smedley,* thought proper to interfere by remonstrance, and *vol. i. 240.* by the attempted investment of Dieppe for the protection of the Huguenots ; but while we would not question her zeal for the Protestant cause, we must think it not unlikely, that, in making this attempt, she was influenced also by a desire to possess another city on the coast of France, in place of Calais, lately lost ; and by the hatred which she felt towards the brothers of the House of Guise. For the causes of this hatred we need not seek, when we remember that it was the Duke who had recovered Calais, and that he and the Cardinal were uncles of her suspected rival, Mary Queen of Scots.

The murder of the Duke of Guise and the ascent of the Prince of Condé to the royal counsels, broke up the different parties that were struggling for superiority in France ; and the surrender of Havre by the English led to a general peace. The Huguenots, however, derived little advantage from it. A treaty, indeed, was agreed upon in the year 1568, and they hoped for security and

liberty of conscience; but it is reported that in the short space of three months from that time ten thousand Protestants fell by the knife of the assassin. In addition to their previous difficulties the Jesuits now waged war upon them; and, by misapplying various passages of Scripture history, pretended to justify the most fearful cruelties, if exercised upon the seceders from the Church of Rome.

In the following year, France was as a kingdom divided against itself; for nearly equal numbers ranged themselves upon the different sides, and once more Elizabeth of England furnished arms, money, and protection to the cause of the Huguenots. The murder of Louis of Bourbon, Prince of Condé, in his thirty-ninth year, was a serious blow to the religious liberties of the Protestants; for it was in consequence of their chieftain's illustrious rank and conciliating temper, and by the aid of his wisdom, energy, vigilance, and constancy, that they were enabled to make so noble a stand against oppression. His death, moreover, forms an interesting era in their history, because it gave occasion for the formal election of a successor as protector of the Huguenots, and the choice fell on one whose name is still more renowned in history than his own, viz: his nephew, Henry of Navarre, afterwards Henry IV. of France.

The peace of St. Germain's then yielded a temporary respite, and the Court of France, affecting a perfect reconciliation, proposed that all differences should be forgotten in the union of the king's sister Margaret with her young cousin Henry. But subsequent events compel us, however unwilling, to believe, that Charles IX., and Catherine, the queen-mother, were not sincere in their professions.

The marriage took place amid the warmest declarations of regard for the Protestants. Blinded by these professions, and relying on the honour of the king, they suffered themselves to be lulled into security. The young bridegroom had no suspicion of treachery, and if any were more keen-sighted, they found themselves prevented from leaving Paris. An attempt on the life of one of their leaders, Admiral Coligny, occasioned some anxiety; but the Court renewed their expressions of regard, and the Protestant population of Paris retired to rest, without suspecting treachery, on the eve of the sanguinary day of Saint Bartholomew.

A.D. 1572.

The unexpected sound of the tocsin awoke them to a sense of their danger. The house where the wounded admiral was lying was first attacked, and himself barbarously murdered, and then every street was filled with armed men, and deluged with blood. A short delay afforded an

opportunity for flight to the few companions of the admiral ; and a most interesting circumstance is recorded in connection with the escape of his chaplain Merlin, which it is pleasing to repeat on the authority of the historian of the “ reformed religion in France,” although the same story has been told of other parties. Merlin “ leapt out of a window and hid himself in a hay-loft, where a hen came and laid an egg by him three days successively : with this he was sustained till the Lord opened a door for him to get out of this blood-stained city.”

Smedley,
note, vol. ii.
p. 5.

Quick,
Synodicon,
i. 125.

The irreligious or unbelieving may scoff at such an incident, but they who recognize a Providence in all the circumstances of their lives, may find pleasure in perusing, and no difficulty in believing it.

The first blood had been shed before dawn, and evening began to fall before any restraint was imposed upon the furious passions which had been unbridled and let loose amongst the populace. The royal family of France witnessed the massacre, and even the king is said to have taken part in it. The chamber of the bride of young Navarre was stained with the blood of one who had fled thither for shelter. All Huguenots who were in the centre of the city were first disarmed and then murdered ; only those who had fixed their lodgings on the outskirts were enabled to

escape; and they would have been cut off had there not been detention from the providential circumstance that the wrong keys had been brought to the gate of the barrier.

The next day the sad work was repeated, though not to the same extent, and if on the third day there were few victims, it was because only few Huguenots survived in Paris.

But a metropolis gives the tone for good or for evil to the provinces, and it was not long before the horrors of the "St. Bartholomew" were re-enacted upon various minor stages. The streets of Lyons ran with blood from the time the news arrived. The Rhone through its whole downward course was crowded by the floating bodies; its waters and fish were for a long time rendered unfit for use, and the astonished inhabitants of distant villages on its banks imagined that some great battle had been fought, and trembled with the apprehension of an invading enemy. The details are revolting; but the pages of contemporary authors abound in narratives of similar enormities in many other parts of France. The whole number of Huguenots that perished is computed variously,—by some at little less than thirty thousand, by others at more than twice as many,—and ample proof of the sad extent of this persecution is afforded by the King's own proclamations for its suppression.

But it must not be supposed that this massacre was without a pretext. France pretended to fear the rebellious intentions of the Protestants. Paris, with her streets garrisoned by soldiers, dreaded murder and revolution from the handful of unarmed Huguenots whom it had inveigled within her walls, to be present at the marriage of Henry of Navarre.

When the news was brought to Rome, the Vatican thundered its applause. Medals were struck as in commemoration of a glorious deed, and a book was published magnifying the authors of it, and with the express object of shewing, (what modern Romanists have been anxious to deny), that this general massacre did not happen casually, nor did it result from the necessity of circumstances, but was premeditated, conceived, and put in train many months beforehand.

The court of Spain was equally rejoiced, and cried, "News, news, good news! All the Lutherans except three were put to the sword in Paris three days since." Of these three alluded to, one had made his escape, the other two Henry of Navarre and the young prince of Condé, were persuaded to recant, and to profess the Roman Catholic religion.

But in England a different feeling was aroused. The French ambassador professed himself, for this shameful fact, ashamed to be counted a French-

man. Elizabeth was not backward in expressing her horror of the act, and her conviction that it was premeditated. Political interests forbade an open quarrel, but the crime of the French court was held in the strongest detestation throughout England, and by her sagacious, noble-minded representative in Paris, Sir Francis Walsingham.

We are unwilling to take our leave of this sad page of history without repeating a burst of rude but powerful eloquence which the official reports • from France called forth from the secretary of our Queen, Sir Thomas Smith. "What warrant can the French make now, seals and words of princes being traps to catch innocents and bring them to butchery! If the admiral and all those murdered on that sanguinary Bartholomew day were guilty, why were they not apprehended, imprisoned, interrogated, and judged? Is that the manner to handle men either culpable or suspected? So is the journeyer slain by the robber, so is the hen of the fox, so the hind of the lion, so Abel of Cain, so the innocent of the wicked, so Abner of Joab. But grant they were guilty, they dreamed treason that night in their sleep: What did the innocent men, women, and children do at Lyons? What did the sucking children and their mothers at Rouen deserve?—at Caen?—at Rochelle? What!—Will God, think you, still sleep? Will not their blood ask vengeance? Shall not the earth

be accursed that hath sucked up the innocent blood poured like water upon it?"

But, in truth, the sin was not so much that of the country as of the doctrine which permitted, encouraged, and applauded such a fearful massacre. In times of excitement, a mob armed with weapons must be an awful scourge in any city; the madness of a rebellious populace has wrought destruction in our own towns disgraceful to the name of England; but a variety of causes has preserved us from the sin of such a wholesale carnage. Possibly there is something in the English character which shrinks from the cool immolation of successive victims such as the years 1572 and 1793 exhibited in France. The massacre of Glencoe, and the executions in 1745, under him who was called the Butcher, are solitary and lamented spots; and in the latter case the fault is chargeable entirely to the individual author of them. There is certainly much protection afforded in this country on occasion of popular commotions by the mixed nature of the Constitution. All but the desperate and the abandoned are interested in the preservation of order and good government, and all of these, except the few intoxicated with ambition, or misled by popular fallacies, have the good sense to see that they must combine to check incendiarism, robbery, and murder. But besides and beyond this, the British people are,

as a people, exhorted to industry, and honesty, to obedience, peace, and harmony; and they have no excuse afforded by either their rulers or their teachers for insurrections or for massacres. Towards the close of the 16th century it was different in France. The populace and the soldiers were prompted and stimulated to this work, and were taught that in so doing they were doing God service. It greatly extenuates the guilt of the ignorant instruments in this affair when we understand that they were acting under the orders of their temporal and the warrant of their spiritual rulers. But in the same proportion it magnifies the guilt of those who urged them on, and who instilled into their minds such dangerous notions.

It is not simply persecution, but deliberate treachery and murder, which are here charged against the King of France and the Roman Catholic doctrine, which perpetrated the deeds of St. Bartholomew's day. Worse than a barbarian's action, they did not arise simply from personal hatred, or political differences, or the desire of plunder, (though all these aggravated the massacre when it was once begun,) but from inveterate dislike of the Protestant Reformation, a wish to re-establish the supreme dominion of Popery as the only true religion, and an intention thereby to do honour to the cause of God. What a melancholy perversion in the mind of man, to think that his merciful

Creator can be propitiated by such sacrifices! What fallacious teaching must have gone forth from the pulpits, and must have filled the chairs at Rome, that could not only induce men to meditate and perpetrate such a diabolical scheme, but even could applaud and attempt to sanctify it when it appeared in all its horrors of success, reeking with the blood of innocent men, of fellow citizens, of unsuspecting guests; stamped with outrage, and rapine, and lust; bedewed with the tears of widows and of orphans, or stained by the unnecessary carnage of those helpless victims!

Is it possible that they thus thought they were doing God service? If we wanted proof of the errors of Rome or of the necessity for a Reformation, behold it in the sanction given to the massacre of St. Bartholomew. By their traditions they had made the word of God of none effect, clearly they proved that they knew not what spirit Christianity was of, nor what that meant—"I will have mercy and not sacrifice." If we apply here the test, "By their fruits ye shall know them," we may clearly see that the Spirit of Christ, which he promised should be ever in His Church, was not prompting Romish Councils on the 24th of August, 1572. On the contrary, that same Holy Spirit *was* sustaining Coligny in his martyrdom, and Merlin in his concealment; that same spirit *was* actuating the councils of England and of England's Queen;

that same Spirit *was* confirming the faith of the few surviving and dispersed Huguenots, as it pointed their attention to the renewed fulfilment of the prophecy, "The time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service; and these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father nor me." *St. John xvi. 23.*

While some, infirm of purpose and entangled by domestic bonds, yielded to the alternate menaces and invitations of the priests, and made formal recantation of their faith;—others, to whom the truth was dearer than life, gave up father and mother, possessions and country, home and all things, for Christ's sake and the Gospel's, and fled at the bursting of this fearful storm to the shelter of their paternal valleys, or found refuge in Germany, Switzerland, or England. Contrary to all human probability, Rochelle, which was the stronghold of the Protestants, survived a nine-months' investment by the best troops in France, and secured for its inhabitants religious liberty.

In 1574 died Charles IX., and he was succeeded by his brother, Henry III., who had already assumed the Crown of Poland. The formation of a league on the part of the Romanists drove the Huguenots into the necessity of a counter league; and Henry of Navarre, who had escaped from France, was appointed its Protector. Not only the difference of their faith had ranged

the parties upon different sides, but the ambition of the family of Guise aggravated the hostility, since they were anxious to exclude from succession to the throne one who had now become, by the death of the king's youngest brother, heir presumptive to the monarchy: and the Pope, *April, 1585* Sixtus V., although he condemned the league as impolitic, lent his assistance to the cause it advocated, by publishing a bull of unusual violence against the *nominal* king of Navarre and the *pretended* Prince of Condé.

The "war of the three Henries," the King, Navarre, and the Duke of Guise, occupied the arms and the thoughts of Frenchmen for some time; and a bold step on the part of the latter, by which he became master of Paris, exhibited the taste of that people for a revolution; and the details of that affair have been since nearly paralleled in the recent three days of July, 1830.

The superiority which the king vainly endeavoured to obtain by arms and by negotiation, he secured for a time by treachery; and, almost in the Royal presence, the Duke of Guise fell by the hands of assassins. But this atrocious act, intended to relieve him of a rival, only hastened the king's downfall. His weakness, selfishness, and licentiousness, had made for him many enemies, and spread a train of rebellion through the kingdom. The murders of the Duke, and his

brother the Cardinal, were the torches to kindle that flame. His danger induced Henry III. to treat with his cousin of Navarre, and together they invested Paris.

This coalition following the death of the Cardinal, invoked the anger of Pope Sixtus; and the wrath of the Church was denounced against King Henry. The publication of this document gave form and action to the fanaticism of a young Dominican, Clement by name; and having obtained admission to the king, he inflicted a fatal wound under the false impression that he was doing a praiseworthy and Christian act, because he was removing one who was declared an enemy of the Church.

The succession of Navarre, under the title of *A.D. 1589.* Henry IV., was presently secured, and all his prudence was exerted to gain the Romanists without losing the Huguenots. His address, activity, and valour, were powerful auxiliaries; but there was One ally greater than all these Who gave him the victory. Of Him he was not unmindful, although his life was too little governed by a reference to His directions; but when a prisoner once expressed surprise at the small number of soldiers in the Royal camp, this open-hearted youth is reported to have thus replied: "You have not yet seen all my forces; you have forgotten to

reckon into your account God, and the good cause, which are on my side."

Of that good cause, however, he did not prove a steady champion. Although a valuable friend and gallant protector of the Huguenots, so long as he was only King of Navarre, (except during the short period after the massacre of St. Bartholomew, when he consented to a recantation,) his assistance was rather chivalrous than consistent; and when the kingdom of France fell into his hands, and it was his interest to side with Romanism, he readily accommodated himself to the instructions of the priests, and proved that his attachment to "the Reformed cause" was rather the result of accident and early impressions than of principle or deliberate conviction. Political advantages induced him to view matters in a new light, and he made a public abjuration of his former opinions.

The facility with which he yielded, implies that he had neither a clear conviction of the truth of the Reformation, nor an accurate knowledge of the state of the argument. One who honestly believes in the corruptions of Popery, and in the apostolical antiquity of the Catholic religion, as reformed from those abuses, can never be induced to fall back upon Romanism, without being liable to the charge of a weak intellect, or of a bad heart. But neither of these charges could be substantiated

against this gallant king of France. Many points in his character may be objected to, and some speak even of selfishness, and abandonment; but an impartial reviewer, looking at man rather as he is, than as he ought to be, would sum up the result greatly in his favour. The fact seems to be, that to a bright genius there were added by nature, a good heart, a strong sense of justice, a burning love of glory, and indefatigable energy; but he wanted sound religious principles. This deficiency it was that exposed him to the attack made upon his faith, and rendered him unequal to resist the temptations of his passions. Moreover, he was but partially instructed in the real nature of the question between the Roman Catholics and the Reformers. His youth had been spent in action, rather than in study. His birth and talent, and other peculiar circumstances, exalted him prematurely into the rank of the protector of the Huguenots. The camp was ill suited to give him the information of which he stood in need; and, consistently with human nature, when he had once drawn his sword in defence of "the cause," and identified himself with its interests, neither he nor his followers were likely to be very anxious about his understanding the merits of the case. Add to this, that the clergy of France would represent that their faith was free from the dangerous tendencies charged against it, and

they would urge that it possessed many marks of a true Church; they would point out all the powerful arguments with which Scripture enforces unity, and they would enlarge upon any errors into which the Reformers might have fallen. If we remember also that the horrors of civil war would thus be probably avoided, that the majority of his new subjects would thus be gained over from the ranks of disaffection, and that thus alone could he hope to conciliate the court of Rome, we shall not wonder that a prince, such as we have described, without high principle, and imperfectly instructed, should think it allowable to side with the majority, and to avow himself a convert to a form of religion that had been long established in the land which he was called upon to govern. But to us, this record of Henry's concession may be made of value, if it induces us to ascertain the sincerity and ground-work of our own belief, so that no influence of circumstances should pervert us. The majority of the English people know, perhaps, but little of the real state of the argument between the Romanists and their own Church, and would be found much less proof against the Romish subtleties, than they believe themselves to be. Even the earnestness with which they now deny the name of Popery, leaves them more exposed to the attack, and less able to resist it. They decline to

avail themselves of some arguments which are common to the Romish and the Anglican Church, lest they should appear to countenance Romanism, and thus they expose themselves to the disadvantage which properly lies only against Protestant Dissenters. An ultra-protestant view of the case is scarcely less liable to degenerate into apostasy than that which may be called ultra-patristic. It is generally a love of truth which has originated and fostered this hatred and dread of every thing Roman: but through ignorance they themselves maintain some opinions that are erroneous, and they unjustly charge the Romanist with things that he knows not. If they should ever enter into the controversy with a Romish priest, they would be shocked to find that they had judged uncharitably; they would be shocked to find that some of their supposed strongholds are not impregnable; and there might in consequence be a re-action in their minds hurrying them as far in the excess towards Romanism as they were once in the excess against it.

Such, however, as have made themselves acquainted with what really are the errors of the Church of Rome, as exhibited either in her official documents, or in her admitted practice, and with the principles of the Church of England, as set forth in her Articles, Liturgy, and Homilies, need have no fears for the result of such a con-

troversy; although, for the young to court debate upon either this subject or upon infidelity, cannot be desirable, since difficulties are started far more easily than they are answered. We do not lie under the same disadvantage which then pressed upon most of the Huguenots, and now upon our own Non-conformists, viz., of separation from the recognized Church, and of an irregularly ordained ministry. While we are theoretically and practically for unity, we have Bible doctrine to warrant our separation from those that preach another Gospel from that which the Apostles have delivered; and while we have shaken off those incumbrances which superstition and tradition have fastened round us, we are still the same Church in doctrine and in discipline which we have seen flourishing under the episcopacy of apostolic men. Separatists may be shaken by the epistles of Paul insisting on the necessity for unity: private interpretations may be overthrown by texts that vindicate to the Church authority to interpret and to decide: Independents and Presbyterians may be defeated on the ground of Church government, when the Romanist declares his authority for apostolical succession, and for bishop, priest, and deacon: Baptists may fail in their peculiar tenet, opposed as it is by the circumcision of the Jews and the practice of the Christian Church: and others who refer to the

Bible only, may find themselves startled by St. Paul's partial approbation of tradition and its very general adoption.

To the Anglican Church, however, these Romanist arguments are not adversaries, but allies ; and in their peculiar points, as especially in the worship of the Virgin and of images, in transubstantiation, and denial of the cup to the people, where the Roman Catholics are opposed by us, they are opposed also by these several seceders from our commonwealth, by tradition, and by the Word of God.

The difficulty which pressed on the French Reformers was doubtless a grievous one : they felt that the Roman Catholic Church had falsely expounded the Scriptures, and not knowing where to find a pure branch of the Apostolic Church, and believing that they saw where the error lay, they attempted to reform themselves ; but feeling at the same time the want of authority and of ordination, (for they knew not that pure stream of unpolluted discipline and doctrine, along the banks of which these Lectures have led us,) they slighted authority, tradition, and ordination, and thereby exposed themselves to continual defeat.

But if the Huguenots partly overthrew themselves by ignorance or by error, the cause of the violent Romanists was more sensibly injured at this juncture by the act of one of their body.

Jean Chastel, a youth of nineteen, subject to melancholy delusions, was encouraged, during a course of three years' study at the college of the Jesuits, to make a traitorous attempt upon the king's life.

A.D. 1594. In consequence, the Jesuits were expelled from Paris, Chastel was executed as a regicide, and the librarian of the college suffered on the gallows. Among the papers of the latter was found one which sufficiently exhibited proofs of his want of respect for kings, and of his want of reverence for the commandment, "Thou shalt do no murder."

See Smedley, iii. 22.

Was it fitting, he asked, in allusion to Henry III., (whom he stigmatized as a pretended monk dispatched by the hand of a true monk,) that France should be governed by a Nero and a Sardanapalus?—Bearne by a fox? (meaning Henry of Navarre)—Portugal by a lion? (Philip II.)—England by a she-wolf? (Elizabeth)—And Saxony by a hog? ("Rudolph the insane.")

Much was urged in praise of Jaques Clement and of Father Bourgoigne, both of whom were exhibited as martyrs and confessors, directly influenced by the Holy Spirit. An expression in one of the letters of condolence, addressed to Henry IV. of France, by a Huguenot admitted to the privilege of correspondence, on occasion of a traitorous attempt upon his life by Chastel, deserves, from its loyalty, piety, and courage, to be recorded in

contrast to that which we have just now quoted from the Jesuit librarian.

“ One word, Sire, must be permitted to my fidelity: God, when he speaks, intends that he should be heard; when He strikes, (and especially if the blow be directed to the great,) He wishes us to perceive that it is His hand, and no other, which can chastise. I doubt not, therefore, that your Majesty will profit by this affliction; not to guard against future attempts of a similar kind, (from which God indeed will be your protection,) but to acknowledge that His hand is lifted against sin, so that you may not draw down its heaviness by abusing His patience, but rather that you may avert it by turning yourself unto Him, and by rejecting everything which may provoke His anger. Thus much have I said to your Majesty, not in the presumptuous spirit of a censor, but in the faithful zeal of a devoted servant.”

Nor may we omit the brilliant sally of D'Aubigné, although it partakes more of the freedom of the soldier than seems consistent with the good breeding of a courtier. “ Sire,” he answered, when the king pointed to the scar upon his mouth, “ you have as yet renounced God with your lips only, and it is on your lips only therefore that He is content to strike; but if at any time hereafter you renounce Him with your heart, it is to your heart that the blow will be directed.”

The fair Gabrielle, who was present, expressed admiration of this saying, but objected that it was improperly applied to the king. "If it be so, Madam," continued this brave soldier, "it is only because it will be unproductive of effect." We are almost tempted to ask, did not D'Aubigné prophesy when he said these things?

About four years after this attempt on the king's life, a warm expostulation on the part of the Reformed, to which they were urged by grievous wrongs, procured for them the celebrated edict known by the name of Nantes, which continued to form the Charter of the Reformed Gallican Church during the remainder of its existence, and upon the revocation of which so many Frenchmen left their country rather than abjure their faith, and found a refuge on these Christian and hospitable shores.

April, 1598
1685.

In this document full toleration was granted to the Reformed; but the chief advantages afforded them beyond what they had obtained twenty-two years before, were their recognition as an acknowledged body in the State, and an access to high offices in judicature and finance.

A.D. 1577.

A few years later, and their condition is thus described by one of their own body:—"Our churches," says he (Du Plessis), "by the grace of God, and under the benefit of the royal edicts, enjoy a condition which they have not any desire

Smedley,
iii. 74.

to change. The Gospel is preached freely, and not without making progress; justice is distributed to us; we have strongholds, to which we may resort for protection in a storm; if we are wronged, our complaints are always heard, or grievances are frequently redressed. It might perhaps be desired that we had more places in which the exercise of our worship was permitted; that they were nearer to each other and more convenient; and it might be neither useless to the king nor undeserved by our service if we were allowed more full participation in the honours and charges of his government. But these are matters to be wished, not to be exacted, and to complain of them would be to exhibit a querulous and self-indulgent temper."

Notwithstanding the restoration of the Jesuits, the Huguenots appear to have continued for a few years in the enjoyment of almost undisturbed repose; but in the interval from foreign hostilities, there was danger of civil dissension. A controversy was commenced upon the doctrine which was then propagating in regard to justification, and, but for the moderation displayed by the orthodox, the strength that was united against the tyranny, idolatry, and superstition of their common enemy might have been dissipated in futile disputes and angry recriminations.

A deeply interesting conference between D'Au-

A.D. 1606.

bigné, as the representative of the Huguenot Ministers, and a Romish Bishop, is reported to have taken place about this time; in which it was tacitly confessed by the Romanists that the first four centuries were insufficient to support *their* claims; and the Reformed were ready to abide by a restoration of such doctrine and discipline, as could be satisfactorily founded upon that limited period of Church History.

The signal for the next troubles that befel the Huguenots was the fatal blow struck by Ravallac, on May 14th, 1610, which covered all France with the robe of mourning, and prematurely consigned to the narrow limits of the grave the gallant Henry IV. of France. This is the third regicide whom a few years of the history of France has left on record, besides a conspiracy which failed; and at the same time attempts were made to assassinate the Queen of England, and after a few years there followed the infamous November Plot. So far as their motives have been discovered, they are traceable to a cause already noticed, viz. the baneful teaching that it was allowable and even praiseworthy to cut off by sudden death a monarch who was denounced by the sentence of the Pope.

The misguided instruments in every case were flattered into the belief that they were chosen instruments in the hands of Providence; and as

fanaticism nerved their arms to aim a deadly blow, they seemed to say, like Ehud unto Eglon, King of Moab, "I have a message from God unto thee." *Judges*, iii. 20. England, however, has never warranted such teaching, but through her clergy has constantly declared that the person of the Sovereign is sacred as the representative of the King of kings and Lord of lords, and asks indignantly with David, "How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine *2 Sam.* i. hand to destroy the Lord's anointed?" so often as ^{14.} the wickedness or insanity of individuals makes the question necessary.

Without attempting to extenuate the defects of Henry's character, his want of disinterested love for the pure doctrine of the Church, or the licentious gratification of his passions, we must still accord to him the title that has been affixed to his name by an enthusiastic people; and it may be reasonably doubted whether any monarch (with the exception, perhaps, of our own Alfred) has been more justly called the Great. The accession of Louis XIII. in his ninth year to the throne of France, with his mother as Regent, introduced Italian policy. Sully, the Protestant minister of Henry, (who could not be bribed into taking the step of recantation which he thought allowable in his master,) was removed; and the weakness of the government paved the way for the master-mind of Richelieu.

In the meanwhile the austerities of Genevan

discipline characterized the proceedings of the reformed. Overtures had been made to James I. of England, that he should take up arms against the Pope; but that pacific prince declined so dangerous a step. In his reply, however, (which was borne by the hands of one, whose name has its peculiar interest, because it is the same with that of the talented historian of England, David Hume), the King suggested the propriety of union amongst all the reformed churches, and the attempt in consequence was made: but the liberty of private opinion had already run into excess; and when we remember the consubstantiation of the Lutherans, the irrespective predestination of the Calvinists, the subtle opinions broached by Arminius, the doubts infused by Socinus, and the Presbyterianism of all the reformers except the British, we cannot wonder that the project failed. Theirs was the mistake already alluded to, having seen the abuses of churchmanship in the Romish priesthood, they had thrown off most of the proper elements of churchmanship. Though anxious for union, there was no common principle to bind them; the voice of the Church not being recognised, they endeavoured to extract truth from the Bible by their own interpretations; and with the best designs, and the most fervent piety, they deduced different inferences, and, each believing his own opinions to be true, they ultimately quarrelled amongst themselves.

Hitherto the inhabitants of Bearne, the paternal inheritance of Henry of Navarre, had been left undisturbed in the exercise of their religious worship; but Louis XIII. was easily persuaded to annex their country to France, to remodel their constitution, and to reduce the Reformed from the condition of an admitted Church to the level of a merely tolerated sect; while he diverted their churches and their revenues into the hands of the Romanists.

At this time the number of the Huguenots was *A.D.* 1619. estimated at one million, or one-fifteenth of the population of the whole kingdom; their churches were about seven hundred, each possessing on an average two ministers. They had been permitted to convene a General Assembly once in three years, but, presuming on the minority of the King, they had met more frequently, and, on their own authority, summoned General Councils. Moreover, they were suspected of banding together for political purposes, and of watching for an opportunity to throw off the monarchy, and to establish a republic. Their religion was declared to be a mere stalking-horse for faction. Louis deprived them of many privileges which his predecessors had confirmed, and, upon their expostulation, openly avowed that he neither feared them as Henry III., nor loved them as Henry IV. had done. Hostilities accordingly were presently

renewed: several towns were besieged, Rochelle *A.D. 1622.* was blockaded, and the King of England, James I. declined affording any assistance beyond that of mediation.

The part which his son Charles I. afterwards took in assisting the French King, was exceedingly distasteful to his countrymen. It formed one of the leading articles in the impeachment of the Duke of Buckingham; and, although it is by no means ascertained whether he or his royal master knew the object for which the squadron was to be used, but which they had provided agreeably to a treaty previously made with the French court by James, it is certain that this transaction aggravated the unpopularity of both. Ultimately, however, the interference of the English minister obtained a peace for the Rochellois; and the neglect of fulfilling agreements guaranteed on that occasion by the King of England, was the pretext for involving this country in a war with France. The design was rash, the details ill-arranged, and the result unfortunate.

On the horrors of the siege of Rochelle, it would be painful to enlarge. It is a sickening and revolting picture to see famine introducing disease and death, and establishing their sad dominion over every house, while faction adds to the distress, and manhood is unnerved, and woman is unsexed; but there is one pleasing incident

which relieves the eye, and refreshes the faith, as we read this sad episode in the sad history of besieged cities. During the height of calamity among the Rochellois, some charitable individuals, who had previously formed secret magazines, relieved their starving brethren without blazoning their good deeds. The relict of a merchant named Prosni, who was left with charge of four orphan children, had liberally distributed her stores, so long as anything remained, among her less fortunate neighbours, and, if ever she was reproached with profusion and want of prudence, she was in the habit of replying, "The Lord will provide for us." At length, when her stock of food was utterly exhausted, and she was spurned with taunts from the door of a relative, she returned home destitute, broken-hearted, and prepared to die, together with her children. But it seemed as if the mercies once displayed at Zarephath were again to be manifested, and that there was still a barrel and a cruse in reserve for the widow, who, humbly confident in the bounty of Heaven, had shared her last morsel with the suppliant in affliction. Her little ones met her at the threshold with cries of joy. During her short absence a stranger visiting the house had deposited in it a sack of flour, and the single bushel which it contained was so husbanded as to supply their necessities till the close of the siege. Their unknown

benefactor was never revealed, but the pious mother was able to reply to her unbelieving kinswoman, "The Lord hath provided for us."

With the surrender of Rochelle, and the demolition of its walls, were extinguished the chief hopes of the Reformed,—and the Roman Catholic religion was proclaimed. Charles I., whose successive expeditions had conferred no benefit on his new allies, made peace with France; and the strong arm and vigilant eye of the Cardinal Richelieu, a part of whose policy it was to suppress the Huguenots, held them in a state of degradation and obscurity.

LECTURE XV.

The condition of the Church in England and elsewhere, from the Martyrdom of Charles I. to the Revolution in 1688.

WE take up our parable in English history where we laid it down; viz. at the scaffold of the martyred Charles. That most unfortunate and most calumniated prince has been charged with insincerity, because he hesitated and wavered in circumstances where he had only a choice of evils. But though he was by nature infirm of purpose, *Southey,* because there was within him a perpetual struggle *p. 506.* between his sense of right and his desire for peace, few men have ever been more nobly and religiously fixed in principle. Though the penalty was his own head, he was ready to make the sacrifice rather than give up the Church. Pressed as he was by foes who held him in captivity, and beset by weak or treacherous friends, he continued firm upon this great point. The Queen, whose influence had been often ill-timed and most unfortunate, urged him to yield, and if he had done so the Romanists would have triumphed no less than

the sectarians; for Protestant Episcopacy is the only real barrier against the revival of Romish supremacy amongst us. But Charles was not to be shaken; he rested upon his coronation oath, and upon his own deliberate and well-grounded conviction that Episcopacy was the form of church-government which had been handed down from Apostolic times. To those who pressed him with arguments, he answered with learning, judgment, and the word of truth: and to his ill-advising friends he replied with earnestness that "his conscience was dearer to him than his crown."

When the monarchy was subdued, the presbyterian and moderate party wished to re-establish it upon certain conditions; but the interests of those who had now become aware of their influence, and who hoped to raise themselves upon the ruins of their country, prevented adherence to any moderation.

In all violent political revolutions this has been and must be the case. The movement party cannot be tranquillised so easily as they were roused. If the moderate reformers, even in their desire to do good, have broken down the principle of obedience, they cannot re-establish it whenever they may wish to do so. Their own weapons are turned against themselves. If they refuse to advance they are called renegades and traitors, (as was conspicuously the case with Strafford,)

and either they must suffer in their turn in the cause of order, or must proceed in the spirit of change much farther than their deliberate judgment would approve. The Presbyterians of Scotland in 1649, and the Girondists of France in 1793, might farther illustrate the truth of this assertion.

The army had assisted the Parliament to conquer the King, but when made conscious of its power it presently turned its arms against the Parliament. Triumphant in Ireland, successful in Scotland, and victorious at Worcester, it beheld the party of the Second Charles entirely broken; and the young King himself was wandering in disguise with a price set upon his head.

But it was rather the general of the army than the army itself that governed England. Cromwell appointed his own Parliament, and when he had exhibited the evils of anarchy, stepped forth with an air of triumph, as if he had been the preserver of his country, and was invested with the authority of a king, but with the title of Protector. If his authority had lawfully devolved upon him, none probably would have appeared more worthy to hold, or more able to enforce it. But ambition seduced him, step by step, into self-deception, hypocrisy, rebellion, and murder. His talents no one will deny, and though his conduct in Ireland may at first sight seem to invalidate his

claim to be considered merciful, the severities which he then warranted were justifiable upon the plea, that he hoped by this means to bring the war to a speedy conclusion, and to avoid unnecessary bloodshed. His religious feelings in the early stage of his career, although mistaken in themselves, somewhat extenuate his opposition to his sovereign; for, if we can suppose that a sense of what he believed to be his duty impelled him to take active measures, we may respect the motive while we pity the delusion. Nothing, however, can excuse the hypocrisy to which he condescended, the artifices he adopted to secure his end, or the cold selfishness of his success. But in the hands of Providence he was an instrument to improve the administration of justice in this country, to advance the cause of Protestantism at home, and to protect the persons and fortunes of Protestants abroad. Unhappily, however, in his zeal for truth he forgot the necessity for unity, and with his opposition to Romish errors he united a virulent hatred of episcopal discipline and ecclesiastical authority. His interests, moreover, combined with his prejudice in this particular. The clergy without exception were attached to the royal cause, and, if permitted to give instruction in either the pulpit or the school-room, they would have declared the scriptural truth upon

the sacredness of the King's person, upon the sin of rebellion, and upon the duty of loyalty.

The interest which Cromwell took in the sufferings of the Protestants is a redeeming point in the usurper's character. The massacre of the Vaudois, performed by the ready agents of the Duke of Savoy's cruelty, dispelled the dreams of tranquillity in which the Reformed had been indulging, and excited terror and indignation throughout Protestant Christendom. It was for awhile believed to be the prelude to a general conspiracy of the Romanists for the extermination of all the members of the Reformed church ; but the prompt remonstrances of the Protector of England, together with his manifest preparations for war in case his "supplications for the slaughtered saints" were not listened to, induced Louis to disavow the acts of his troops, and to admonish the Duke of Savoy to forbear.

Since Rome had cast us off in the days of Elizabeth, the English people had uniformly acted as if they considered it a duty to resist Popery and its extravagancies. For a time they adhered closely to Apostolic Order, as well as to Evangelic Truth, but when the spirit of protesting ran into excess, they condemned Laud to the scaffold, stained themselves with the judicial murder of their King, and set aside Episcopacy. Nevertheless, the work appointed was the overthrow of

Popery, and the prosperity of the country coincided with its conduct in this particular. A leaning towards the Papists was the signal for discomfiture, while alliance with the Protestants insured success. A somewhat similar result might have been traced in the history of the continental Church during the preceding hundred years. Although the several societies of the Reformed suffered persecution, the nations that befriended them were for the most part successful.

*Vaughan's
Protecto-
rate.*

Happily an independent witness confirms this statement. A talented essayist, who is quoted here for his facts, not for his opinions, has written thus: "From the commencement of the Reformation, to the peace of Westphalia, religion continued to be the great object of war and alliance throughout Europe; and during the whole of that interval, the scale of political power continued to turn, with little variation, on the Protestant side. Spain sunk rapidly from its high state of promise at the close of the fifteenth century; and Austria was too much occupied in defending her territories bordering on the dominion of the Turks, to be capable of acting with efficiency in relation to a large portion of Europe. In the meanwhile France was becoming more consolidated and powerful."

But from the peace of Westphalia, religion, as the great object of negotiation, began everywhere

on the Continent to give place to questions relating to colonies and commerce. It was in England only among the states that influenced the balance of power in Europe that the principle of the Reformation was strenuously maintained. Spain and Austria, Italy and Portugal, had always been, and were likely to continue, the enemies of the views that it maintained. France, although for political reasons, and under Henry IV. the seat of the "Protestant Confederation," was itself Romanist in the proportion of twelve to one, and was ruled by men who were Roman Catholic adherents, unless their separate interests interfered too greatly with Italian policy. Sweden and Denmark, indeed, were Protestant, but their influence was small, and their tenets were rather guided by the views and genius of Gustavus and their other leaders, than the fixed opinions of a free people. In Germany, in the Netherlands, and in Switzerland, although the preponderance was with the Reformed, the population was almost equally divided, and if any one canton or province exhibited unusual zeal, or attempted to advance its favourite cause, it was immediately opposed and generally checked by its nearest neighbour; or, at least, advantages gained in one quarter were counterbalanced by losses experienced in another. The Eastern Church was not in a condition to render any aid. Having been subjected to the

Turkish yoke, its moral and its physical strength were nearly gone. Though still protesting against Rome, as was proved by repeated fruitless attempts at union, and by its acknowledgment of the Patriarch of Constantinople as its head, the Greek Church had leaned too much to fables to effect a satisfactory reformation; and no door of communication with the Western Protestants had yet been opened to awaken a sympathy in their behalf. It was England alone that had both the power and the will to fight the battle of the Reformed religion, and not alone were the Vaudois benefited by her timely interference, but the Protestants, from regions so distant as the confines of Hungary and Transylvania, directed their hopes towards the kind offices of the English Commonwealth.

Into the details of the reign of Charles the Second, we have little occasion, and even less desire to look. It is a matter of notoriety that he cruelly disappointed the hopes of those gallant spirits who had lost parents, brothers, children, and estates in the cause of his family; who had risked their lives and their remaining property in securing his restoration; and who were prepared to obey literally the precept of Sir Thomas Wyndham, and "never to forsake the crown though it should hang upon a bush." It is a melancholy truth that this selfish prince proved as ungrateful

to God as he was to man, although the hand of Providence reinstated him on the throne of his fathers after all human attempts to do so had completely failed. In place of being a nursing father to the Church, and more particularly to that pure apostolical branch of it existing in his own land, he insulted the cause of religion by the licentiousness of his life, and the immorality of his court, and at last died with the profession of Romanism upon his lips.

It is not improbable that this was always in secret his belief; and considering his conduct, it was, with the exception of infidelity, the most convenient doctrine he could hold: for it suggested masses for the dead to make atonement for the sins of the living, and substituted a death-bed profession, and the passport of the viaticum, for the less welcome details of a holy life, a continued practical exposition of a holy faith, and a daily growth in grace, with the simple unassisted intercession of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Others have supposed that Charles's refusal of the sacred element at the hands of his own clergy was simply the consequence of inability to swallow: and that his assenting to the Romish communion was an inadvertent act produced by the bigotry of his brother, the Duke of York. But perhaps the truth was this, that in life he thought little about the matter, and when dying he re-

called early impressions, or embraced the doctrine which best soothed his apprehensions. There is a natural oscillation in the human mind which darts from one extreme into its opposite, and it is no uncommon thing to see a man flying from the rebukes of conscience and a life of infidelity, and taking refuge at the altars of superstition and idolatry.

The two great points of interest in connection with this reign are the progress of Non-conformity, and the superior character of the Episcopal divines.

The zealous Presbyterians had been much offended by the renewed strength of Episcopacy in Scotland. The succession of bishops among them, which had met with a variety of interruptions during the sixteenth and early part of the seventeenth centuries, was restored from the A.D. 1661. Church of England; and severe laws were passed against conventicles and those who should frequent them. These laws had been rendered necessary by the opposition and the violence of the Covenanters, while that violence was aggravated and that opposition increased by the King's suspected partiality for Romanism and by his despotic measures. Thus their fanatical enthusiasm was stimulated, and they dignified their sufferings with the name of martyrdom. Throughout England also there prevailed a jealous appre-

hension of Popery; and though at first men's fears were vague and ill-defined, they assumed tangible and most hideous shapes when Titus Oates professed to make revelation of a Popish plot: and when the heir presumptive to the throne professed his assent to the Roman Catholic creed. Then, influenced by the apprehension of having a Popish Sovereign, and flattered by their friends in England, the Scottish Covenanters assumed a bolder front, and went armed to their meeting-houses. Suspecting that they were betrayed by one who had negotiated for them with the king, and who had been exalted to the dignity of the Scottish primacy, and uniting paradoxically a virulent hatred of Episcopacy with the notion of advancing a righteous cause, a few of them waylaid the venerable Archbishop of St. Andrews, and committed one of the most atrocious and unnecessary murders that stain the annals of the country.

This violence, however, and the rude attempts at dictation on the part of the Commons, together with the doctrines of loyalty preached in the churches, and the popular manners of Charles the Second (who won the hearts of his people while he lost their respect) created a reaction in favour of the Church and King.

It was an easy matter to recall to mind the events that had occurred some thirty years before; and all who recognized any blessing in the

existence of a limited monarchy, or any truth and beauty in the doctrine and services of the Church, united to maintain those privileges which were in danger from the encroaching disposition of the Commons, or from the avowed hostility of Non-conformists. The success of the sovereign probably tempted him to repeated abuses of his power, and raised up many enemies; but the disclosure of the Rye-House Plot, as it was called, reinstated him in the people's favour.

A.D. 1662. The policy of the Act of Uniformity has been much questioned: the difficulties of the case were many, and even at this distance of time it is not easy to decide what course was best calculated to prevent disunion. Certainly the immediate effect of that measure was the separation of many: in one day two thousand ministers resigned their preferments: but, as many of these had not been properly ordained, the privation to which they were subjected was only privation of that which never properly belonged to them; and the benefices were thus restored to the pious clergy from whom they were originally forced. Possibly there was a deficiency in patience and in charity, and too great haste in pressing the Non-conformists to subscribe. Probably, as signature was the test proposed, many of the most conscientious were excluded, and the most indifferent and worthless were permitted to retain their benefices;

and certainly some of the most exemplary (as Baxter and Calamy, to whom, in acknowledgment of their worth, bishoprics had been offered) were exposed to the indignity of a prison, through the venality of common informers, and the violent passions of persecuting magistrates. Nevertheless there was no prospect of uniformity so long as the ministers themselves disagreed upon such important points as Episcopacy and a form of prayer. Either the Church of England was to be altered to accommodate the views of those who differed, or the scrupulous must cease to occupy her pulpits, and to minister at her altar.

Against these early Separatists, however, we bring no charge of deliberate schism, though we are satisfied that their judgment was in error. They left the Church for conscience' sake, and only when they were obliged to come to a decision. It was not simply the choice of a preacher, nor a fancied slight, nor the want of the best seat in the synagogue that *then* made Non-conformists. They suspected that the royal family were trying to bring in Popery under cover of the Episcopate and Liturgy; they were used to Presbyterian government, and had received Presbyterian ordination; and they preferred entire separation to a surrender of opinions to which they were attached by early education, by constant association, and by what may be called, without

intending disrespect, a community of interest. But the Church remained firm upon this point, and proved by the greatness of the sacrifice, how high a value it set upon episcopal ordination, and that it believed it to be an integral part of that holy society which Christ separated to himself out of the rest of the world.

While we speak thus tenderly of the Non-conformists of that day, and respect a plea that is set up by conscience, we cannot be blind to the fact, that continuance and acrimony in opposition are diametrically opposed to the apostle's arguments for unity, as well as to that spirit of brotherly love which ought to characterize the Christian Church. Moreover, it is plain that the plea of conscience against law is a most unsafe one, for there is no saying where it may end: and if one is at liberty to refuse compliance with a tax which would support churches because his conscience objects to church discipline or doctrine, another may refuse submission to a tax which would raise money to support an army, if he believes war to be inconsistent with the teaching of the Gospel. Let it be once admitted that only such laws are to be valid as men's consciences agree to, and how shall we subject to the law, "Thou shalt not steal," the Anabaptist, who, according to the case put by Selden, has appropriated his neighbour's horse to his own use, under

the conviction that all things are common among the saints?

One who should argue thus might be thought more worthy of an asylum than of a prison; but although the absurdity is more apparent when the case is so stated, the argument is precisely the same when any would interpret the necessity for obedience by the uncertain testimony of their own impressions.

The hostility that was thus excited among the ranks of the Protestants; revived the hopes of the Romanists; but the laws that were then passed, as the Test Act, (which required of all who filled places of trust under the government, that they should receive the Eucharist, according to the rites of the Church of England, take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and make a declaration against transubstantiation,) and the Disability Act, (which excluded Romanists from a seat in Parliament,) secured the supremacy of Protestant Churchmen, and at the same time drove Dissenters, as they now began to be called, and Roman Catholics, into more open opposition. Toleration was a word scarcely understood. Some Churchmen were willing to extend it equally towards both of his opponents, but the Non-conformist refused to accept it if it was to be shared also by the Romanist; and the Romanists have too clearly proved that they will only admit of the

principle which its name implies, when they are themselves the weaker party.

But we now turn our thoughts to the English clergy of those times, to whom our own British monarch, George III. paid a just tribute, when he happily applied to them the Scripture phrase,—

Gen. vi. 4. “There were giants in the earth in those days.” They had been tutored in a good school for improving the talents and energies of men—the school of adversity. They had benefited by the increase of learning introduced by the Reformation, and fostered by the patronage of Edward, Elizabeth, and James. They had, also, the advantage of experience; for, in the course of the last century, every question relating either to Christian doctrine, or to ecclesiastical discipline had been opened up, and closely investigated through its wide and extensive ramifications. Having been called upon to decide on a great variety of subjects, amidst jarring interests, and subtle distinctions, their judgment and their temper were well exercised, and they were obliged to think deeply, and to speak boldly. Summoned in turn to suffer and to rule,—to protest against either extreme, and to defend their own position, their tongues and their pens were actively exercised, and they acquired a force of language, and a solidity of reasoning, that we seek

in vain in these calmer moments of comparative prosperity.

The courage and principles of some of the bishops were severely tested in the succeeding reign ; but for our present purpose it is sufficient to refer to the testimony of an able writer in their favour, and to record a few of their names with their characteristic qualities. There were the sterling *Southey*,
p. 522.
Sancroft, (Archbishop,) the devout Ken, the learned Stillingfleet, the simple and convincing Tillotson, the eloquent commentator Simon Patrick, the mighty champion of Episcopacy, Jeremy Taylor. There were the philosophical and candid Cudworth, the indefatigable Burnet, Sanderson, (Bishop of Lincoln,) whose learning will be acknowledged though the dryness of his style has closed his books against the indolence of modern times ; and Barrow,—the mighty Barrow, (whom Charles II. called the “ unfair preacher,” because he so completely exhausted his subject that he left nothing for others to say upon the same text,) whose views were clear, whose reasoning close, and whose taste delicately refined. It is no slight compliment to two of these, that they have been classed in a triumvirate with the judicious Hooker, whose successful labours have been already noticed. “ Hooker,” says Archdeacon Bonney, “ is the object of my reverence, Barrow of my admiration, and Jeremy Taylor of my love.”

The plague which devastated London in this reign, we may consider, without any breach of charity, a scourge of the Almighty punishing for sin. Licentiousness was openly countenanced, and profligacy was the fashion. Creeds were canvassed by the majority, as a matter of political rather than religious interest. Differences in spiritual matters were conducted with a bitter and unchristian animosity; and there seemed danger lest, in the general loss of principle, the true worship of God should be forgotten by the mass of the people. The felt anger of the Deity, however, awakened many a thoughtless sinner, and enlivened the affections of many a languid heart. The general effect, besides the moaning of the diseased, the sufferings of the dying, and the lamentations of survivors, was a turning to the Lord their God. We might apply almost literally, the words of the sacred historian relating the destruction of the first-born in Israel,—

Exodus xii.
30.

“There was not a house where there was not one dead:” and though with some, the sad familiarity with death bred recklessness and indifference, blasphemy and dissipation, the greater number gat them to their Lord right humbly, and many exercised the tender offices of charity at the risk of their own lives, with the cheerful devotedness of ministering spirits.

The fire of London, which immediately suc-

ceeded, is to be deemed a visitation sent in mercy rather than in anger. The suspicion that it was the work of the Romanists has long since died away as groundless and unjust, and no other cause can be attributed than what is commonly called accident, but more properly, the will of God. It served the beneficial purpose of purifying that great city, and thus of releasing it from the continuance of the contagious malady; for what the thoughtlessness of man would have neglected, or his cupidity have imperfectly performed, the fire of London effectively secured.

Among the greatest losses which were then experienced was the destruction of eighty-nine churches, but in judgment God remembered mercy, and four* were permitted to escape, which happily were in the hands of the most able and moderate clergy of the day.

The same year which in England witnessed the accession of James II., witnessed in France the revocation of the edict of Nantes. Of that edict we have spoken as the charter of protection to the Protestants abroad, and its revocation was the signal for their wide dispersion. Louis XIV. then occupied the throne; and had for many years postponed any close attention to

* The names of these four churches are St. Helen's, Bishopsgate; St. Andrew's Undershaft; St Olave's, Hart Street; and St. Ethelburga, Bishopsgate.

ecclesiastical affairs, as he was deeply engrossed in the pursuits of ambition, of pleasure, and of military glory; increasing his marine force, making suitable harbours, humbling the pride of Genoa, and taming the wildness of the Algerines. In maturer life, when gusts of devotion began to alternate with those of more earthly passions, he thought he might atone for his vices by cementing the bonds of the Church, and he conceived the idea of compelling his subjects into a unity of faith. However desirable such unity is, it is plain that it can only be effected by the blessing of the Spirit of God, and that that blessing will not be given where idolatry is practised, or where imposture rules. Compulsion, by sharpening its sword, and by lighting its fires, may make the *faithful* martyrs, and the *weak* apostates; but it never can make *good* men converts.

The Huguenots were, of course, the conspicuous sufferers: independently of their faith, their opulence had raised them many enemies; for, under the administration of Colbert, the successor of Mazarine, their ingenuity and industry in the several branches of manufacture had met with favourable notice; and while their silks, laces, velvets, tapestries, and carpets, made all other nations tributary to France, and supplied the excessive drain upon the exchequer occasioned by foreign wars, by the waste of the king, and by

the ostentation of the court, they, at the same time, filled the purses of the despised citizens who wrought them. The hope of plunder, therefore, united with the feelings of bigotry in suggesting that short-sighted policy, which endeavoured to compel these men to embrace the national religion. Although the attempt was perfectly successful in destroying the peace and dispersing the fortunes of the Huguenots, it entirely failed of its avowed object. Comparatively few abjured the Protestant opinions, and the majority, flying with their families, took with them the secrets of those arts which had been to their country an inexhaustible mine of wealth, and were welcomed in England, and, after her example, in Denmark and A.D. 1685. Holland. By this political error and moral crime Louis XIV. was deprived of nearly half a million of his subjects. Hundreds, nay, thousands, were suddenly put to the sword, and the rest were hunted like wild beasts upon the mountains, until 400,000 escaped from their country, priests, soldiers, merchants, and mechanics, carrying with them wealth, science, industry, and skill; and (which was more injurious to their native country) diffusing through the lands they visited an intense hatred of France and of Popery. Nor was this all; the section that remained became a thorn in her side, and a scourge to punish her. When their educated and legitimate pastors, who had

held them in check, and taught them obedience to the civil governor, had been removed, there rose up in their place enthusiastic, but half-instructed men, who, as self-constituted teachers, spread the evils of fanaticism far and wide, and presently roused the passions of the people, previously almost maddened by persecution, into acts of open rebellion.

If we had leisure, there would be a painful interest in tracking the course of the unhappy emigrants. The pastors had been banished, and the sheep desired to follow their shepherds; but the government used all their influence to prevent their doing so. Emigration, nevertheless, proceeded: some concealed themselves in vessels leaving the harbours; others ventured to cross the water in open boats; one crew of forty souls put to sea without provision, and had no refreshment but a little melted snow to moisten their parched lips, until, after a long passage, they happily found a hospitable reception on the shores of England.

Smedley,
iii. 275.

“Many encountered shipwreck, the fate of others was wholly unknown; some, from the more western provinces, were made prizes by Corsairs, and endured years of slavery in Africa; some were thrown upon the coast of Spain, and did but exchange persecution at home for an equal measure of severity from the Inquisition. The greater number, however, by daring courage, by the sacri-

fice of their little remaining property in order to bribe those appointed to hem them in, or by the adoption of some skilful disguise, effected their retreat; and there was scarcely any labour too heavy, any service too menial, any privation too acute, to which even women of condition refused to submit, in order to escape the yet more hateful spiritual bondage and degradation which awaited them if they remained in France."

The testimony of Bishop Burnet (who at that time had withdrawn from England, in order to avoid the hazardous intrigues consequent upon the accession of James II.) is to this effect:—

"One in the streets could have known the new converts as they were passing by them, by a cloudy dejection which appeared in their looks and deportment. Such as endeavoured to make their escape, and were seized, (for guards and secret agents were spread along the whole roads and frontiers of France,) were, if men, condemned to the galleys; if women, to monasteries. To complete this cruelty, orders were given, that such of the new converts as did not at their death receive the sacrament should be denied burial, and that their bodies should be left where other dead carcases were cast out, to be devoured by wolves or dogs."

And again, in one of his letters written at the

*A.D. 1686.
Own Times
i. 659, fol.*

time, after alluding to a variety of instances, he says:—

“In short, I do not think that in any age there ever was such a violation of all that is sacred, either with relation to God or man.”

Among the benefactors to the unhappy exiles we find that the Prince and Princess of Orange, (afterwards William and Mary,) and the English nation stand conspicuous. Even James II. directed that collections for their relief should be made in all the churches. So many of their ministers as were content to receive fresh ordination, and to submit to episcopal discipline, were freely admitted in England to the priesthood: and thus again we recognize the vast importance which the English Church has always attached to apostolical succession, although the Romanist would insinuate that she is herself without it. They who were not willing to submit, either formed separate Presbyterian congregations, or joined themselves to such religious societies as they found already in existence.

King James II.'s sincere attachment to the Church of Rome was his misfortune rather than his fault. Early prejudices become so engrafted on the system, that they are not easily eradicated; those especially connected with religion entwine themselves around the heart, and often can only be removed with life itself. It is not surprising,

that, having been educated chiefly on the Continent, and under the influence of a Romish parent, he viewed England and the Church in England as schismatic, and believed his only safety to be in communion with Rome. His second marriage with the fair Italian, Mary of Modena, at once signified and confirmed his affection for her creed; but his sincerity upon this point is proved by all his actions. Even when heir-presumptive to the throne, he proclaimed his opinions in the House of Lords, and in consequence obtained a special exception in his favour. In the moment of assuming the reins of government, he made no secret of his opinions, notwithstanding the known feelings of the people, but went openly to mass, appointed Roman Catholic ministers, and sent to Ireland a Romanist as Lord-Lieutenant. He despatched an ambassador-extraordinary to Rome, to reconcile his kingdoms formally to the Holy See, and disgraced the Duke of Somerset (Lord Chamberlain) because he refused to perform the illegal ceremony of introducing the Pope's nuncio at court.

Other signs of his attachment to the Romish cause were daily exhibited, and with such singular indiscretion as to make it difficult for his most loyal subjects to vindicate his conduct. His imperiousness aggravated his errors, for the slightest opposition to his will was construed into rebellion,

and excited his serious displeasure. When the bishops appealed against his command to read from their pulpits a declaration of indulgence to the Non-conformists, his conduct was both uncourteous and unjust. With a courage truly laudable, Sancroft and six of the bishops signed a petition to His Majesty, and respectfully submitted that the declaration was founded on a prerogative which the Parliament had repeatedly declared to be illegal. With this the King was grievously offended, for he claimed to himself dispensing power; and the seven prelates were committed. The reverence with which the people greeted them on their way to the Tower, the fervour with which the gentry drank to the health of the seven champions of the Church, and their public acquittal by a jury, increased his annoyance; his pride was farther wounded on the latter occasion by the unseemly rejoicing of the soldiers in the camp at Hounslow, even within their master's hearing.

Interference with appointments in both of the Universities farther illustrated his readiness to exceed the utmost stretch of his prerogative, and the avowed opinions of those whom he supported testified that his object was to advance the interests of Romanism. Even successful opposition failed to open his eyes to the conviction that he must make his choice between the crown and the crucifix, for he could not retain both at the same

time ; and the remonstrances of friends, and the treachery of enemies, equally fell short of revealing the proverbial truth, that no people are more easy than the English to be led, and none more hard to be driven.

The event, however, which was the immediate occasion of his fall, was one which lighted up with joy every chamber of the palace, and was for a season the cause of unmixed congratulation there,—the birth of a prince.

From respect to hereditary succession, from consideration for his previous misfortunes, from his advanced age, which gave a prospect of speedy release, or from the better principle of honouring the King, almost all classes of the British Protestants had been contented to await the course of nature and the dispensation of Providence in respect of James's removal. Notwithstanding the secret agencies of William of Orange, they did not entertain the thought of supplanting their monarch, until threatened with a continuance of Popish councils under a lengthened regency, and with the probability of another sovereign succeeding to his parent's principles. Regardless alike of their fears, of his own security, and of his son's succession, James gave one farther indisputable proof of his attachment to the Church of Rome ; he caused the infant prince to be baptized into her communion.

The fears and the passions of all were thus excited: the partizans of the Orange faction saw their prospects darkened; the disappointed courtiers hailed the interference of another interest; the Presbyterians were loud in favour of William, and even loyal Churchmen began to waver. Accordingly, on the arrival of the Prince of Orange, not only did the generals (especially Churchill, afterwards the famous Marlborough) begin to fall off, one by one, in despite of the bonds of personal obligation, and the solemn oath of allegiance; but also his favourite daughter, the princess Anne, left his roof by night and deserted to the enemy. Who could see the unhappy Prince on the morning when he heard this news, and not forget his faults in pitying his misfortunes? Who can wonder that all firmness forsook him, that tears started from his eyes, and that he broke out into sorrowful exclamations, descriptive of a deep sense of his forlorn condition; "God help me!" he cried, in the agony of his heart, "my own children have forsaken me!" Not Cæsar slain by Brutus, nor Lear, unhoused by his daughters, can present much stronger claims upon our sympathy. The concessions which he was then willing to make were far too late to appease the passions of his enemies, or to avert his fate.

In estimating the characters of this period we are apt to be misled by confusing their actions with

the results that followed : but this is a great error. The results were of God's working, and the anticipation of them, only partially influenced the movements of many of the actors in that drama. If we were behind the scenes we should find that all had their own motives, some good, some bad, and most of them mixed ; and though they combined to produce a certain end, it was because the mercy of Providence over-ruled their actions, and made them instruments to his gracious purpose. From the neglect of seeing this, it has arisen, that, because the Revolution was in some sense glorious, men are accustomed to unite glory with the name of William, and to heap obloquy on James. And yet the latter was not the despicable tyrant and bigot he has been often represented, but acted even in his errors from a supposed sense of duty, and exhibited in private life many proofs of amiability : while in William, on the other hand, though an instrument for a good purpose, there are many details which we must distinctly censure. Although professing himself a champion of the Protestant cause, he never for an instant lost sight of his own interest : an intruder, in right of his wife, he thrust her father from his throne, excluded her brother from his inheritance, and was satisfied with nothing less than complete rule. The people of England, influenced by their regard for the principles of the Reformation, and thinking

that they saw in his coronation together with that of his wife, an easy solution of their difficulty, agreed to alter the line of succession, and the constitution of the country. Doubtless England was blessed by the change, and the Revolution was a glorious event, but these will not sanctify the means which were adopted to effect it.

The part which the clergy and conscientious lay Episcopalians took in this measure, is a deeply interesting question. Their position was one of no ordinary difficulty. On the one hand they had believed and taught the doctrines of non-resistance to constituted authority, and of passive obedience; on the other, they were bound to protest against errors in faith as well as in practice, in high places as in humble cottages. Their duty to their King seemed opposed to their duty to God. But the case did not come thus palpably before them, for then they would assuredly have felt and have proclaimed that they must obey God rather than men. If told to worship the Host, or to profess belief in Transubstantiation, the course would have been clear; but no test was demanded of them that they could refuse: they were allowed to continue their ministry in peace, and their religion was still the established religion. They saw, indeed, the King, the Court, and the Government, favouring Popery, but they had no power to check the evil,

except in their proper province of preaching to such as would hear them.

So long as the King gave orders not inconsistent with the word of God, and the law of the land, they were bound upon their own principles to render obedience. When he assumed a power beyond his own, they respectfully protested, and patiently submitted to an ignominious prison, and to an insulting trial. After their release they firmly and faithfully remonstrated with their master, and gave him excellent advice. Moreover, they inculcated in their sermons, loyalty and patient submission, and throughout they acted upon the principle which Bishop Ken professed in the first memorable interview with James. "We are bound to fear God, and honour the King; we desire to do both; we will honour you—we must fear God." The difficulty is also well expressed by Dr. Peachell, Master of Magdalen College, Cambridge, in a letter preserved in Pepys' Diary: "I am sorry," says he, "as well as unhappy, to be brought to a strait 'twixt God and man; the laws of the land, and the oaths we lie under, are the fences of God's Church and religion professed amongst us; and I cannot suffer myself to be made an instrument to pull down those fences. If His Majesty in his wisdom, and according to his supreme power, contrive other methods to satisfy himself, I shall be no

murmurer or complainer, but can be no abettor. For the doctrine, discipline, and worship of our Church, I heartily believe was neither fetched from Rome nor from Geneva, but from Jerusalem, from Christ and his Apostles."

But things were fast coming to a crisis. James was practically, if not avowedly, introducing Romanism. William was promising to re-establish the Protestant cause, and artfully concealed his own designs upon the kingdom. James declined the invitation of the bishops to convene a parliament; and then William was applied to for that purpose by Sancroft and other peers, Thus far the Primate aided in the Revolution. but no farther: and a letter from James, written after his abdication, not only clears Sancroft from any suspicion of rebellion, but speaks of the king's obligations and regard.

The conduct of most of the distinguished ornaments of the Church on that occasion, was in like manner consistent and praiseworthy. They resisted firmly, yet respectfully, the arbitrary proceedings of James while he was King, and after his flight sacrificed their worldly advancement when they conceived that their allegiance to him demanded such surrender. Their circumstances put them forward in the fight, and they nobly defended their country and their faith. A new difficulty arose in consequence of the election of

William, and his requiring to be crowned. Though they were clear as to the removal of a popish sovereign, especially when he could be persuaded to abdicate, they could not recognize any authority in the people to appoint a new Ruler, and they denied the necessity for excluding the male issue of their lawful monarch for ever from the throne. The doubts cast upon the birth of the infant, as child of the King and Queen, were evidently the offspring of malice and disappointment, and the allegation of a surreptitious introduction of a babe into the royal chamber, admitted of such slight support, that William did not dare to affirm it before the council of the nation, notwithstanding his previous threats upon the subject.

Happily, we are not now called upon to express an opinion upon the exclusion of the Stuarts, because all the branches of that royal trunk, exposed to many a storm, and blighted by the will of Providence, have withered into nothingness; and because we are never again likely to be exposed to the same difficulty, as the Sovereigns of England since that day are virtually bound by their coronation oath to forfeit the crown in case of their embracing Romanism.

Even the wisest and best men differed as to the course they should pursue, when William III. claimed their allegiance. Sancroft was deprived

of the primacy because he could not conscientiously take the oaths required of him; but Tillotson consented to succeed him as archbishop, and, though the latter thought the former wrong in coming to that conclusion, he did not think him wrong, since he held those opinions, in refusing to pray for William and Mary, as the king and queen. Sherlock, moreover, first thought it right to join the Non-jurors, and afterwards felt himself justified in resuming his mastership of the Temple, and in succeeding Tillotson, as dean of the metropolitan cathedral.

The struggles of the exiled family for the recovery of their hereditary throne, exposed England to the agitation of cabals, and the distressing horrors of civil wars, for nearly sixty years; but here, for a while, we bring our labours to a close. The subsequent struggles in the Church, her missionary exertions, and her duty in conveying to others the truths she has received, are interesting topics for the succeeding century; but now we take our stand upon the Protestant citadel of England, and cast one lingering glance upon the ages we have traversed.

In the holy family whom the Lord hath called after his name, we discover a distinct society, in the world and yet not of it, proclaiming the same truths with one unvarying voice to each successive generation, gradually overcoming the agents and

instruments of evil, rescuing mankind first from the grosser vices that were identified with barbarous idolatry, and then from fashionable corruptions blended with a refined superstition. Heathenism and Romanism fell before it. Temporal and spiritual despotism, political and domestic tyranny, are inconsistent with the kingdom which Christ established upon earth. When so introduced into a nation as to characterize its policy, it elevates its moral and intellectual character ; it adds much to private happiness, and much to public strength ; it sanctions authority, and it secures submission ; it dignifies the noble, and exalts the humble ; it punishes vice, and it protects the innocent. And when so admitted into an individual man as to rule within him, it enlarges the heart, and it sanctifies the spirit ; it brings down blessing, and strength, pardon, and peace, from Heaven ; it introduces the sinner to the Saviour, and, through the mercy of God, opens the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

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